

**DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECONDARY  
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION**

by

Jack Owens

An education leadership portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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## **ABSTRACT**

At the close of the 2013-2014 school year, many of the Indian River School District (IRSD) secondary schools did not have a whole-school approach to provide interventions to students who had historically not met state test benchmarks. Although some schools provided intervention classes, afterschool programs, or small group pull-out support, there was no process by which teachers could work collectively to identify at-risk students, assign interventions, and increase or decrease the level of support based on progress monitoring. In addition, there were few, if any, processes in place to analyze intervention data. Unlike the Response to Intervention (RTI) tiered approach in which a team reviews the progress of individual students and monitors progress regularly, the intervention classes provided assistance on a wholesale basis. Moreover, the afterschool programs provided extra support for all students, not just those identified as the most at-risk. RTI looks at students on a more individualized basis. Schools must provide a learning environment that accounts for the various learning styles of the students. This means that they must provide supports (or interventions) for struggling learners. Simply allowing students to continue to struggle without changing the instructional strategies is unacceptable. RTI provides a way for schools to screen students and look at their past academic history so interventions may be put in place to prevent academic failure. While leaders of the IRSD schools recognized the need for intervention, they wrestled with how to determine where to find the time and resources to effectively plan for such an intense and important

program. A systemic approach to instructional differentiation is now a “must” if educators desire to meet the needs of all students.

## Chapter 1

### **INTRODUCTION**

The RTI Action Network defines Response to Intervention as a multi-tier approach to identify and support students with learning and behavior needs (RTI Action Network, 2015). As stated by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (2006), RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instructional goals and using that data to make important educational decisions. King, Hill, and Lemons (2012) suggest that RTI has the potential to enhance the ability of secondary schools to improve student academic performance. District level support is important if RTI programs are to be implemented effectively within the district's secondary schools. Although MacIver and Farley-Ripple (2003) acknowledge that proponents of school-based management believe that instructional practices and curricular decisions should be left to the school leaders, they question whether schools have leaders have the knowledge to adequately support good instructional practices. From my district position, I am able to provide RTI implementation guidance and support to school leaders by evaluating current programing, reviewing and disseminating relevant research and best practices, developing selected RTI program elements, and evaluating RTI implementation annually. I also coordinate RTI resource allocation and share "lessons learned" as RTI implementation progresses.

In secondary schools, the need for effective models of delivering interventions to struggling readers is readily apparent (Heller & Greenleaf 2007). Canter, Klotz and Cowen (2008) note that effective RTI implementation will require significant planning and leadership from administrators. The district has recognized that school leaders will need support in order to effectively implement RTI within their schools.

This portfolio organizes the work that I conducted over the last two years to support RTI implementation in the IRSD secondary schools. There are six chapters and nine appendices in this portfolio. This chapter introduces the work that was conducted over a two-year process. Chapter 2 discusses in more detail the specific problem that I addressed – the absence of a district-wide RTI plan for our five secondary schools. Chapter 3 focuses on improvement strategies that were undertaken to address the problems associated with the absence of such a plan while Chapter 4 reviews the results of the improvement strategies. Chapter 5 reflects on the results of the improvement effort during the initial implementation of RTI within IRSD secondary schools. Chapter 6 focuses on my improvement effort results. Chapter 7 outlines my leadership development throughout my enrollment in the Educational Leadership Doctoral program at the University of Delaware. Finally, the nine appendices include my portfolio proposal and eight artifacts that summarize my work to address the absence of a district-wide RTI plan for secondary schools. The nine appendices are titled as follows:

Appendix A: ELP Proposal

Appendix B: Millsboro Middle School Evaluation Report

Appendix C: Secondary Response to Intervention Planning

Appendix D: Literature Review

Appendix E: IRSD Response to Intervention Board Presentation and Narrative

Appendix F: Assessment of Current Status of RTI in IRSD Secondary Schools

Appendix G: Secondary Principal Meetings Summary

Appendix H: Selecting a High School Math Intervention Program

Appendix I: Policy Development.



## Chapter 2

### **PROBLEM ADDRESSED**

IRSD schools are expected to provide a learning environment that accounts for the various learning styles of the students. Supports (or interventions) for struggling learners are essential if all schools are to strive to meet the needs of all learners. Simply allowing students to continue to struggle without changing the instructional strategies is not acceptable. A systemic approach to instructional differentiation is now a “must” if educators are to meet the needs of all students. RTI is a structured approach that can help the district’s secondary schools better meet the diverse needs of all students.

District-level supports have focused recently on standards alignment and, as a result, not on recent state mandates for systematic secondary RTI programing. Because district resources have not been specifically allocated for RTI implementation, schools have been challenged with planning and implementing their own programs. Schools were told that RTI implementation is a must; however, because of the focus on standards alignment, minimal district resources were available to support their RTI efforts.

### **Organization Composition**

The IRSD is located in southeastern Sussex County, Delaware. IRSD is geographically the largest school district in the state. Because the district spans the majority of central and southern Sussex County, the student demographic is broad.

The diversity at each secondary school is presented in Table 1. RTI implementation will be important in meeting the diverse needs of all students within the IRSD.

Table 1 IRSD Secondary School Data

| Variable           | Indian River H.S. | Sussex Central H.S. | Georgetown M.S. | Selbyville M.S. | Millsboro M.S. |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Grades             | 9-12              | 9-12                | 6-8             | 6-8             | 6-8            |
| Enrollment         | 900               | 1450                | 600             | 700             | 680            |
| African American   | 12%               | 15%                 | 14%             | 13%             | 15%            |
| Hispanic           | 16%               | 32%                 | 52%             | 24%             | 15%            |
| White              | 68%               | 46%                 | 30%             | 58%             | 60%            |
| Low Income         | 28%               | 35%                 | 44%             | 36%             | 42%            |
| Special Education  | 17%               | 14%                 | 15%             | 13%             | 11%            |
| ELL                | 3%                | 10%                 | 10%             | 4%              | 1%             |
| RTI Implementation | Year 1            | Year 1              | Year 3          | Year 2          | Year 3         |

*Delaware Department of Education, 2015*

<http://profiles.doe.k12.de.us/schoolprofiles/State/Default.aspx>

### Academic Need

Although secondary ELA scores have room for improvement, in recent years, high school mathematics state assessment and SAT scores have emerged as an area of great concern for IRSD. IRSD high school students have historically scored above the state average on state assessments in mathematics. Recently, the gap on standardized assessments between IRSD and the state has closed. Table 2 illustrates how the gap has closed from 2011 to 2015 (Delaware Department of Education, 2015). However, in 2015, the Delaware state average of students meeting the standard in mathematics on the 11<sup>th</sup> grade 2015 Smarter assessment was 23%, the IRSD average was 20%.

Only 15% of students met or exceeded the designated achievement levels at Sussex Central High School (SCHS) while 26% of students met or exceeded at Indian River High School (IRHS). Thus, over the last five years, IRSD high school students have gone from consistently scoring above the state average in mathematics to falling below the state average.

Table 2 Comparison of IRSD High Schools Performance in Mathematics to State

| Group    | Percent of 10 <sup>th</sup> Graders Meeting DCAS Mathematics Proficiency |           |           |           | Percent of 11 <sup>th</sup> Graders Meeting DE Smarter Balance Proficiency | SAT Quant Scores |
|----------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|------------------|
|          | 2010-2011  | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015  | 2013-2014        |
| Delaware | 59   | 72        | 69        | 68        | 23   | 443              |
| IRSD     | 68   | 77        | 72        | 68        | 20   | 439              |
| SCHS     | 66   | 71        | 69        | 59        | 15   | 420              |
| IRHS     | 71   | 85        | 77        | 77        | 26   | 458              |

*Delaware Department of Education, 2015*

Although various academic strategies have been implemented at SCHS, between 20% and 40% of the 9th and 10th grade students testing have not meet proficiency levels in reading and math on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS). About 20% of the IRHS students have not meet state DCAS benchmarks.

Millsboro Middle School, Georgetown Middle School and Selbyville Middle School have also exhibited inconsistent levels of student proficiency on the state's standardized assessments. At times, over 30% of the middle school students have not

met proficiency benchmarks in reading and mathematics. Table 3 outlines IRSD middle school Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) reading and mathematical historical data since the 2010-2011 school year (Delaware Department of Education, 2015). As illustrated, there have been some years when a significant percentage of students have met proficiency levels and other years when many students did not meet proficiency levels. In most cases, between 20%-30% of students are not meeting annual proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. Although district middle schools have implemented various forms of RTI for the last few years, a comprehensive review of middle school RTI programs has not occurred. Strategic supports for program upgrades have also not been in place.

Table 3 Percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Meeting DCAS Proficiency at IRSD Middle Schools

| School | Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| MMS    | Reading      | 74%       | 78%       | 80%       | 73%       |
|        | Math         | 71%       | 85%       | 78%       | 69%       |
| GMS    | Reading      | 66%       | 75%       | 72%       | 74%       |
|        | Math         | 73%       | 83%       | 87%       | 80%       |
| SMS    | Reading      | 72%       | 85%       | 73%       | 81%       |
|        | Math         | 78%       | 89%       | 78%       | 77%       |

The analysis of data is not new to the administrators and teachers of IRSD. During my tenure with the IRSD, our superintendent has expressed an ongoing

commitment to professional development for all. Professional development days have been an important part of the annual district calendar and specific professional development days are allocated to analyzing student data. Our superintendent has supported efforts to provide research-based practices that will support the academic growth of all students. She has also supported schools as they developed programs that will meet the needs of their individual populations while complying with state and national mandates. She feels that the leaders within their schools know their populations the best and requires that they develop programs that can meet the unique needs of their students. With that said, I was confident that our secondary schools would embrace support for the development of programming that would enhance services for students.

### **Organizational Role**

As the IRSD's Director of Compliance and Accountability, my role included providing support and guidance to principals and their schools as they implement federal, state and district programs. My past experience as an assistant principal in IRSD during the initial implementation of elementary RTI provided me with a great deal of knowledge of RTI and the implementation process. Several years ago, while an assistant principal at North Georgetown Elementary, I was able to participate in a year-long RTI training followed by first-year implementation of RTI. While this training was designed for implementation at the elementary level, the lessons I learned during training and implementation were invaluable. Not only was I exposed to practical examples of how RTI can be implemented, but I was also able to experience how a mindset shift was needed from the school stakeholders. In my opinion, the most valuable lessons were learned "on the fly" as the teachers and staff of North

Georgetown Elementary adjusted to an entirely new way of providing supports for struggling learners while also identifying students for special education services. My new district role has now positioned me to be able to provide guidance and support through a perspective of experience. With my position, I am also able to coordinate programing across schools so they can share resources and lessons learned during previous attempts to implement intervention programs. This portfolio describes, reflects on, and provides documentation of my role in planning and guiding RTI implementation in the district's secondary schools.

This portfolio will provide insights on my efforts to assist IRSD secondary schools as they enhanced existing RTI programs or developed first-time programs. The portfolio is a collection of research, strategies and resources that collectively supported secondary school implementation of RTI. This compilation of work assisted schools with the development of programs that are providing a more systematic approach to support students than ever before.

### **Improvement Goal**

The nationwide trend to increase levels of school accountability has challenged districts to build programs that will allow schools to best meet the diverse instructional needs of students. RTI has become a popular and mandated framework for addressing this challenge. The IRSD's initiative to meet the needs of all students through the implementation of RTI mirrors the national trend. Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code indicates that "each public agency shall establish and implement procedures to determine whether a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions for reading and mathematics" (Delaware Code Title 14 Education. Section 12.0 Response to Intervention Procedures).

To address the goal of providing district support to secondary schools as they developed RTI programs, I assisted secondary schools during the initial planning, program development, and year one implementation of RTI. According to MacIver and Farley-Ripple (2003), two of the components of the role of the central office are to support good instructional practices through professional development for principals and teachers and to evaluate the feedback loop from evaluation to decision making. I recognize that schools are busy places that implement multiple curricula, programs and schedules. If schools are expected to design RTI programs that are grounded in research and meet the diverse needs of the students, while continuing to operate their current educational programs, district support will be vital.

## Chapter 3

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

In response to state mandates, the IRSD required all secondary schools to implement a strategic RTI plan for the 2014-2015 school year. Although the secondary schools of the IRSD have made adequate yearly progress (AYP) over the last few years, as determined by the Delaware Department of Education (DDoE), systemic plans must be in place for students who continue to fail to meet benchmarks.

#### Planned Artifacts

Appendix A provides an overview of my proposal to the committee to move forward with the work of providing district support for the implementation of secondary RTI. The proposal outlines the problem, my goals for improvement and a description of my planned artifacts. To support schools as they build upon previous and existing programs, I developed strategies and resources that are presented in Appendices B-F. Each appendix presents an artifact of my efforts to support schools in their development of an RTI program that not only fits the unique needs of each school but also complies with state regulations, and is worth emulating.

#### **Millsboro Middle School Program Evaluation**

Millsboro Middle School (MMS) established its RTI program in 2012 and has been refining the program each year. During the fall and winter of 2013 I evaluated the recently modified MMS RTI program. The complete evaluation can be found in Appendix B. Through the evaluation process I garnered information from the



administration and staff and reviewed the RTI data analysis process used at the school. I surveyed the seven teachers who were involved in MMS's RTI process to determine their readiness and comfort level with the program (see Table 4 below). Their responses affirmed that they were prepared to implement the RTI program. Almost half reported that additional supports or resources would be helpful; this is not surprising given the early stage of the program in this school. Table 4 provides a complete illustration of survey responses.

Table 4 Teachers' RTI survey ratings

| Item   | Strongly Agree | Agree       | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| The professional development provided during returning teacher week was an effective process for preparing me for RTI instruction. | 0<br>(0.0)     | 5<br>(71.4) | 2<br>(28.6) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time spent planning for the RTI period did not interfere with my ability to plan for my other content.                         | 1<br>(14.3)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 1<br>(14.3)       |
| I am prepared to teach the content I teach during my RTI period.   | 4<br>(57.1)    | 3<br>(42.9) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| 8 weeks is enough time to accurately assess a student's progress in the RTI period.  | 1<br>(14.3)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 1<br>(14.3) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time dedicated to students during the RTI period is well spent.  | 2<br>(28.6)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| I do not need additional support or resources to effectively teach during my RTI period.   | 2<br>(28.6)    | 2<br>(28.6) | 3<br>(42.9) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time spent in the RTI period will increase literacy and math at MMS.   | 1<br>(14.3)    | 6<br>(85.7) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| I collaborate with my colleagues when planning for my RTI period.  | 1<br>(14.3)    | 4<br>(57.1) | 2<br>(28.6) | 0<br>(0.0)        |

Note. N=7

Analysis of Scholastic Reading and/or Mathematics Inventory (Scholastic, 1999) assessment data was used to assess the progress of 250 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the RTI program. Baseline data indicated that the average mathematics score for students was 731 and the average Lexile score for reading students was 837. After 10 weeks, all students were given a second Scholastic Reading and/or Mathematics Inventory. Results of the second round of assessments indicated an average growth of 19 points for mathematics and an average growth of 73 Lexile points for reading. Paired sample t-tests revealed that both sets of gains were statistically significant (SMI,  $p < .02$  and SRI,  $p < .01$ ). The findings from the evaluation demonstrate that the RTI program had a strong start during the 2013 school year at MMS. After ten weeks of interventions, students made gains in both reading and mathematics.

In addition to specific recommendations provided to MMS, I used the findings to start constructing a plan to support future implementation of RTI within IRSD. One important lesson learned from MMS was the need to provide all school staff with professional development related to the school's RTI program. I also realized that it would be helpful to develop a boilerplate RTI presentation to inform all faculty about their school's RTI program; the presentation should be easily modified to meet the specific characteristics of each school's RTI program. Additionally, the MMS evaluation revealed that teachers are likely to desire additional intervention resources and curricular training.

### **Secondary Response to Intervention Planning**

In order to become more informed about RTI programming and processes within the state, I interviewed leaders who have recently implemented RTI or are systematically changing their RTI programs based on the lessons learned from

previous years. I also interviewed representatives from the DDoE to learn more about specific mandates that are currently in place and practices that it has found to be particularly promising. Appendix C outlines the information gathering process.

Through this process, I challenged myself to accomplish three key tasks:

1. To explore neighboring school and district processes associated with the implementation of an intervention period.
2. To identify the “lessons learned” from secondary schools and districts that have implemented RTI.
3. To collaborate with IRSD administration and the secondary principals to share insights and to develop a strategic schedule and PD plan for RTI implementation.

My school visits included Polytech High School, Millsboro Middle School, and Milford’s Central Academy/High School. Phone conferences occurred with Lori Duerr, Manager of School Improvement from the Colonial School District; Dr. Mike Young and Mr. Brian Donahue, Assistant Principal and Principal, respectively, from Cape Henlopen High School; and Mrs. Carolyn Lazar, Education Associate from the Office of Assessment at the DDoE.

These interactions provided me with valuable information related to the decision making process for RTI implementation. This information helped me to advise the IRSD middle and high schools with first-hand, local RTI knowledge. Some key information that I was able to share with IRSD schools was that they should:

- Ensure the implementation of Common Core State Standards with fidelity. The ability to impact the entire student population will take place at the Tier 1 level with effective core curricula implementation. Tier 1 instruction will likely have one of the largest impacts on the success of the student population.
- Explain the reasoning behind the implementation of RTI in the school to appropriate stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, parents and Board of

Education). As indicated by several of the administrators visited, orientation and training on RTI is essential to program success and sustainability.

- Train staff on the look and feel of the new schedule. Because this will be a change for all staff, it will be important to adequately train all staff. The greater their level of understanding, the more likely they will be to embrace the new schedule.
- Inform appropriate staff on the curricula that will be used during the intervention period.
- Provide professional development to support the pedagogical needs of the staff. A strong repertoire of instructional strategies will help students in all tiers of RTI.
- Develop a plan to continually evaluate the success of the program. One suggestion would be to include a review of the program strengths and weaknesses during regular instructional leadership meetings.

Some of these lessons reinforced what I learned from the MMS evaluation.

They helped shape many of the subsequent activities and strategies reflected in the artifacts below.

### **Literature Review**

In order to better understand the landscape of RTI, a literature review was conducted to explore nine common elements of RTI as identified by Canter, Klotz and Cowan (2008):

1. Administrative support
2. Systemic data collection
3. Staff support and training
4. Parent support and involvement
5. Understanding of legal requirements
6. Realistic timelines

7. Strong teams
8. Integration with existing schedules
9. Coordination of existing intervention programs.

The entire Literature Review can be found within Appendix D

One of the greatest takeaways from my review of the literature was the confirmation that school staff, especially principals, need support as they implement and refine their RTI programs. Lau, Sieler, and Muyskens (2006) found that the successful implementation of RTI requires principals to demonstrate their commitment to the program through participation in team meetings, the allocation of resources and the restructuring of staff time to allow for problem-solving meetings. In order for this to occur, principals must understand RTI and the options for implementation within their schools. King, Lemons, and Hill (2012) listed the tasks below that principals must consider when implementing RTI:

- Align the school's components of RTI to the school's mission statement.
- Monitor the delivery of their teacher's instruction and assist them with the development of intervention instruction to support the needs of the students.
- Utilize related service staff on the RTI team.
- Provide necessary professional development related to the analysis of student data.
- Become more informed of RTI through collaboration with the knowledgeable leaders within their buildings such as school psychologists.
- Connect with local researchers to form partnerships in the development of secondary RTI programs.

I was able to share much of the major findings from the literature review during principals' meetings or individual conversations with school leaders. In an article written for the RTI Action Network, Batsche (N.D.) suggests a three-year timeline to fully implement RTI. Year one should focus on consensus building and core instruction associated with Tier 1. Year two should focus on data analysis and Tier 2 development. Year three should focus on evaluation of RTI progress thus far and Tier 3 interventions. This information provided me with a timeline to help guide principals as they worked to refine their RTI programs.

Other literature helped shape my guidance of the design of schedules. For example, one reoccurring theme was that secondary schools should not simply replicate programs that occur within elementary schools. King et al. (2012) caution against the assumption that secondary level RTI techniques is met with the same success as those that have successfully been implemented with elementary RTI programs. Whether the secondary school is currently operating on a traditional multi-period schedule or a block schedule, options exist in considering how to integrate RTI. King et al. (2012) discussed the framework of the traditional 6 to 8 hour-long periods and the 100-minute block schedule, where classes occur on an alternating basis. The researchers shared that those schools with a traditional schedule should plan for a course explicitly dedicated to intervention instruction or allow content-specific teachers the opportunity to teach interventions within their courses. In contrast, they noted that those schools operating on a block schedule should allow for the students to be subdivided during the block to receive instruction from a team of teachers who are assigned to certain groups based on the intervention needs. Because traditional and block schedules exist within IRSD secondary school, this information was valuable.

## **Board Presentation**

Once secondary RTI information was gathered from IRSD schools and beyond, a presentation was developed for the members of the IRSD Board of Education. The presentation, which can be found in Appendix E, provided an overview of the current state of academic interventions at the secondary level, the RTI framework and the benefits of RTI at the secondary level. The presentation stressed the importance of providing interventions to students who are at risk of not meeting their full potential. The presentation also sought to inform them of Delaware state code requirements that support program implementation.

The presentation was designed to gain support and commitment for the secondary school RTI program from the IRSD Board. My interviews with other Delaware district and school personnel stressed that stakeholder support for an RTI plan within the district was a key to program success. I felt that a keen awareness of the processes and the benefits associated with a calculated plan would be important to gain the Board's support. Moreover, experience has taught me that the Board members will be more likely to provide staffing and fiscal support for a program that they understand and feel will benefit students.

## **Assessment of Current Status of RTI in IRSD Secondary Schools**

In order to assess the current status of our secondary RTI programs, I used the American Institute for Research's (AIR's) RTI Fidelity Rubric (Center on Response to Intervention, AIR, 2014). A complete illustration of the process and findings can be found in Appendix F. The RTI Fidelity Rubric covers five main categories of RTI: Assessment, Data-Based Decision Making, Multilevel Instruction, Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms, and Fidelity and Evaluation. Within each category, several

subcategories represent specific elements of RTI. Although AIR developed a 5-point rubric, I adjusted the rubric to represent a 3-point scale for ease in understanding. A score of one indicated that no or minimal implementation had occurred in the specific area, a score of two indicated partial implementation, and a score of three indicated complete and effective implementation. I conducted interviews with key RTI staff at each school to collect information about the status of their respective programs; based on this information, I assigned a score for each category for each school.

I added the points earned for each of the rubric categories for each school. Table 5 presents both the five categories and the total score earned by each school (maximum 84). The total scores ranged from a low of 64 (SCHS) to a high of 75 (SMS). The mean for the five secondary schools was 71. The district middle schools generally scored higher than the high schools. Higher middle school scores are likely due to the fact that IRSD middle schools began implementation of their RTI program before the two high schools. As shown in Table 5, all schools, were at or near the district mean except SCHS's Infrastructure Support score which was three points below the district average in that category.



Table 5 RTI Fidelity Implementation Rubric Subsection Scores.

|      | Rubric Section         |   |                                       |                                       |                                      |                   |
|------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
|      | Assessment<br>(max=15) | Data-Based<br>Decision<br>Making<br>(max=9) | Multilevel<br>Instruction<br>(max=33) | Infrastructure<br>Support<br>(max=21) | Fidelity &<br>Evaluations<br>(max=6) | Total<br>(max=84) |
| SCHS | 12                     | 6   | 27                                    | 15                                    | 4                                    | 64                |
| IRHS | 15                     | 7   | 30                                    | 18                                    | 3                                    | 73                |
| SMS  | 13                     | 8   | 30                                    | 20                                    | 4                                    | 75                |
| MMS  | 14                     | 7   | 30                                    | 19                                    | 4                                    | 74                |
| GMS  | 12                     | 6   | 29                                    | 19                                    | 4                                    | 70                |
| Mean | 13/15                  | 7/9   | 29/33                                 | 18/21                                 | 4/6                                  | 71                |

Four strengths were identified from this analysis. These included the following: ELA and Mathematics teachers have a strong understanding of the RTI framework, all secondary schools have proactively considered RTI when developing their master schedules, RTI coordinators have been assigned at each secondary school, and all schools are utilizing Scholastic Mathematics Inventory (SMI) and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) to screen students.

The assessment also identified the following six areas of need: additional professional development in Scholastic Mathematics Inventory/Scholastic Reading Inventory, more consistent Tier 2 and 3 intervention curricula, the development of a process or mechanism for sharing RTI documents among all schools, RTI training for non-ELA and mathematics teachers, a clear set of procedures for tier transitions, and consistent checks of the RTI fidelity and overall success of the program.

The above strengths and needs were used to shape the support that I provided to secondary schools. This support is described in more detail below.

## **Secondary Principal RTI Support**

During the 2014-2015 school year, part of the monthly Secondary Principals' meetings was devoted to reviewing the development and progress of RTI programs (see Appendix G). The primary purpose of this professional learning time was to provide a structured forum for the principals to analyze the current state of their RTI programs, to learn about RTI best practices and plan for future RTI programming.

At one of the initial meetings, principals reviewed the information that was gathered through the RTI Fidelity Rubric. I shared information on the schools' strengths, areas of need, steps taken and overall thoughts on programming progress. Sharing the findings was an opportunity to provide both individualized school feedback and a district perspective of secondary RTI implementation progress. After receiving their comprehensive reports, principals asked questions about the rubric findings and reported out on the progress made since the assessment was completed. Remarkably, their discussions revealed that the schools had made progress since the assessment was conducted.

In the months after this information was presented to principals, substantial support was provided to the secondary teams. At times the support was provided by me and in other cases; I partnered or arranged for other departments to provide support. Supports are described briefly below.

- The development of a plan for ongoing SRI and SMI professional development is in place for the 2016-17 school year. The IRSD Department of Instruction collaborated with Scholastic, and representatives will facilitate professional development during the 2016-2017 school year. Scholastic representatives visited the district in November 2016 to provide professional development to teachers who use the Read 180 and Math 180 Tier 3 curricula to instruct students who qualify for tier 3 interventions.
- The IRSD Department of Instruction is now assisting with the ongoing evaluation of intervention curricula. A rubric has been adopted for

evaluating interventions under consideration. Portions of the AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric will be used to assist with decisions related to the success and continued use of intervention curricula.

- An online repository for storage and sharing of RTI documents has been created by members of the IRSD Department of Technology. This Schoology site provides a platform for schools to upload RTI documents and to communicate with others about RTI. IRSD district instructional staff monitor and update the site with RTI resources when appropriate.
- To assist schools with providing their staff with RTI information, I developed a PowerPoint presentation that can be shared with all staff. This presentation provides an overview of RTI and can be modified to include school-specific information.
- Documents were developed by the IRSD Department of Instruction to facilitate decisions related to RTI schedules and student tier placement. The forms were developed using a combination of existing RTI documents created by district schools and were reviewed with the principals during subsequent monthly meetings.
- During the second half of the 2015-2016 school year, regular secondary RTI coordinator meetings were held. These meetings were led by the IRSD secondary literacy specialist. Topics of meetings included a review of the RTI process, the status of current reading and math interventions, guidance and tools used to support interventions, Tier 2 and 3 entrance and exit criteria, and progress monitoring tools and procedures.

### **Selecting a High School Math Intervention Program**

My experiences with RTI implementation at the elementary level taught me that a well-developed RTI program emphasizes the importance of strong interventions for both ELA and mathematics. When conducting interviews to complete the AIR Fidelity Rubric, it became clear that schools' ELA curricula were much more consistent than the mathematics curricula used for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. In addition, student achievement data also indicated that secondary math scores have

declined over recent years. I thus felt it was important to examine the mathematics interventions currently being used in the RTI program

During the 2014-2015 school year an IRSD math intervention curriculum selection committee was formed to select a viable mathematics intervention curriculum at the secondary level. The selection process first consisted of an internal review of the current mathematics curricula in use throughout the district, including Khan Academy, Study Island, Math 180 and Perfection Learning. The district was prepared to look externally at intervention curricula if internal curricula were found to be ineffective. The review committee used five questions to review existing math curricula:

1. Is the program aligned to standards?
2. Is the program accessible for students?
3. What is the cost of the program?
4. Who is the target population of the program?
5. What is the potential for program usability?

Its review of the four possible interventions is summarized within Table 6.

I conducted an independent review of the same programs using Fuchs' (2011) six instructional principles tailored for RTI Tier 2 mathematics interventions (also presented in Table 6). Scores of 1-3 were assigned after considering the research cited, a review of the curricula websites and discussions with district staff. Ratings using Fuchs' criteria were generally high (15-18 out of 18 possible points). Khan Academy scored maximum points in each of the six categories for an overall score of 18. Although Math 180 also scored maximum points, there is a significant cost associated with this program. The Perfection Learning curriculum scored a score of 15/18 and the

Study Island Curriculum scored 17/18. Both programs lost points for *Instructional Design*.

Table 6 Math Intervention Program Findings

| Criteria                       | Khan Academy   | Study Island  | Math 180  | Perfection Learning                                       |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
|                                | IRSD Program Review Criteria                                   |   |   |   |
|                                | Yes  | Yes   | Yes   | Yes   |
| Accessibility                  | Online   | Online  | Classroom lessons and Online                              | Booklets and Online                                       |
| Cost                           | Free   | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses     | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses |
| Target Population              | Primarily Tier 2 students                                      | Tier 2 and 3 students   | Primarily Tier 3 students                                 | Primarily Tier 2 students                                 |
| Usability                      | Previous student outcomes and student acceptance were positive | Previous student outcomes and student acceptance were minimal | Proven effective with Tier 3 students                     | Has been successful and was well-received by teachers     |
| Criteria                       | Program Review Based on Fuchs' Key Principles                  |   |   |   |
| Instructional explicitness     | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Instructional Design           | 3 (adaptive)   | 2   | 3 (adaptive)  | 2   |
| Conceptual Basis of Procedures | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Drill and Practice             | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Cumulative Review              | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Motivators                     | 3 (badges)   | 3 (games)   | 3 (games)   | 1   |
| Total                          | 18   | 17  | 18  | 15  |

Note: Ratings on Fuchs' key principles can range from a high of 3 (meets the ideals of the principle) to a low of 1 (does not meet the ideals of the principle).

The district team determined that Khan Academy was the best choice for Tier 2 interventions because the program is aligned to state and national standards, is easily accessible via electronic device, is free, and meets the needs of the students. My review, using criteria specifically tailored for RTI Tier 2 mathematics interventions, supported the district team's decision.

### **RTI Policy Development**

After considering the assessment of the current status of RTI in IRSD secondary schools (Owens, 2015) and the growing concern among members of the IRSD Office of Accountability and the Office of Instruction surrounding fidelity to the tenets of RTI, I felt the district would benefit from the adoption of an RTI policy. I believe that clear criteria and expectations associated with the implementation of RTI could not be achieved without the support of a district policy. Historically, once a policy is in place, the IRSD Board will support programing and procedures that align with the policy. In contrast, if schools are not in compliance with a policy, corrective action is taken until compliance is met.

To inform the development of the policy and procedures, I searched for examples at both the state and national levels. Although I was unable to find specific RTI policies within the state, my search of RTI policies within the nation identified five policies that align with the Delaware and the IRSD RTI framework. The policies and the current framework of IRSD policies were used to develop an RTI policy for the district.

Each of the policies reviewed contained important features that helped guide the development of the proposed IRSD RTI policy. All of the reviewed policies contained many of the same elements but were simply organized in slightly different

ways. I was specifically interested in the following elements: a philosophy statement, a needs statement, a description of the RTI processes and a parent communication statement. These four elements are both key to effectively articulating the need for a policy and to outlining the primary components of RTI. Although each of the reviewed policies may have not contained all of the elements that I felt were important to an IRSD RTI policy, they each contained important features that helped to guide policy development. I was not concerned with locating the “perfect” policy, but rather with uncovering elements from policies that could be combined to create a clear and effective policy for IRSD. Table 7 summarizes the key elements included in each district policy.

Table 7 Components of RTI Policies Reviewed

| District                             | Philosophy Statement | Need Statement | RTI Process Description | Parent Notification |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Caldwell School District             | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| Longview School District             | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| City School District of New Rochelle | ✓                    | ✓              | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| Cape Flattery School District        | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| New Hartford Central School District |                      | ✓              | ✓                       |                     |

After drafting the policy, it was reviewed with members of the IRSD Department of Instruction. The Department helped to refine the wording of the policy and agreed with the outlined procedures. The members of the department felt that the



policy would help to strengthen their initiatives to support RTI within the middle and high schools. The Department of Instruction considered whether the policy would fit within a section of one of the existing instruction policy. After much debate, it was determined that the policy was best suited to stand-alone. Next, I met with Superintendent Dr. Susan Bunting to review the proposed policy and to explain my rationale for the policy. After a discussion regarding the importance of the policy, she agreed that there was indeed a need. We further discussed whether the policy could fit into an existing IRSD policy, or whether the policy should stand alone. Dr. Bunting agreed that the policy was too important to imbed within an existing policy. Thus, it was decided that the proposal should be submitted to the policy committee for consideration. Typically, the policy committee will review the policy twice, request needed revisions and submitted to the full board for final approval. The first reading of the proposed policy occurred during the April 2016 IRSD policy committee meeting. During this meeting I reviewed the proposed policy and articulated the importance of an IRSD RTI policy. Few questions were asked from the members of the committee.

The new RTI policy was adopted unanimously by the IRSD Board of Education on May 23, 2016. The policy and accompanying procedures immediately went into effect. The policy has been used to support the work and decisions of schools as intervention programs are developed and implemented. Appendix I outlines my process for researching and developing the RTI policy.

## Chapter 4

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY RESULTS**

As a result of my RTI improvement efforts, new resources and practices are in place to support IRSD secondary schools. Each of the improvement initiatives has helped to foster an environment of support for the appropriate integration of RTI into district secondary schools. The results associated with this effort to support RTI implementation at the secondary level were overwhelmingly positive. During the last two and a half years, district and school leaders established RTI programs in each middle school and high school that meet the criteria outlined within state regulations. Improvement strategy results include the development of:

1. An RTI professional development plan for intervention teachers.
2. An evaluation process for RTI intervention curricula and overall RTI programs.
3. An online database to store RTI documents.
4. An RTI presentation that can be modified to meet the needs of each school.
5. Monthly secondary RTI meetings.
6. A district RTI policy.

The RTI programs are not only compliant with state and national laws but, according to and district leaders, and most importantly, they are also making a positive impact on student learning within schools.

### **Professional Development**

Although teachers acknowledged that they understood the process for assessing student progress, the MMS evaluation and the information gathered from the AIR fidelity rubric found that staff desired a more proficient understanding of SRI and SMI intervention curricula. According to district instructional leaders, training specific to this curriculum has been needed for quite some time. Because the Math 180 curriculum supports the Tier 3 need of the district's secondary students, it was important for the district to ensure that the program was implemented with fidelity. Professional development support was provided by Scholastic representatives in November 2016. The professional development focused on Scholastic's Math 180 intervention curricula. A representative observed the teachers who use the curriculum and provided feedback based on best practices of the program. The training was well-received, and teachers noted after the training that they had a better understanding of their curriculum. In January 2017 Scholastic representatives will return to the district to provide support for the teachers of the Read 180 program.

### **RTI Curricula and Program Evaluation**

The IRSD Department of Instruction now plans to assist with the evaluation of intervention curricula and overall RTI school programs. The determination to evaluate annually was generated, in part, from the information gathered during my visits with school leaders and RTI teams in neighboring school districts and DOE who all expressed the need for continual evaluation of the program. In addition, the IRSD Department of Instructions realized the wealth of information that could be gathered through the AIR Fidelity Rubric and decided that an annual evaluation of the programming was a necessity. The IRSD Department of Instruction will conduct

annual evaluations of the secondary RTI programs beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. A rubric has been adopted for RTI assessment purposes. Portions of the AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric will be used to assist with decisions related to the success and continued use of intervention curricula in the future. The expectation is that an annual analysis of RTI programming will contribute to ongoing curricula development. This analysis will also inform the IRSD regarding the type and level of support needed for each school.

### **Online Database**

The IRSD RTI *Schoolology* site now provides a platform for schools to upload RTI documents and to communicate with others about RTI. The determination to create this site occurred after ongoing conversations among the RTI coordinators during their monthly meetings. This team of teachers felt that a site devoted to RTI document sharing would greatly benefit the schools; such a site would reduce the need for each school to create its own documents. They were comfortable with the layout of this site, as it is used throughout the IRSD for other group-sharing information. The logistics of the site have been shared with all school RTI coordinators, and the site is an active resource for schools. This platform has improved consistency and efficiency among schools. A review of the site shows an ongoing dialogue between RTI coordinators before and after monthly coordinator meetings. Members of the site include secondary RTI coordinators and district office instructional staff. Currently, the site has been updated with the following documents:

- Instructions for administering fluency passages
- Record sheets
- Progress monitoring documents

- Learning Walk tools
- Instructional Support/RTI process quick reference guides
- Process Checklist
- Intervention Checklist
- Parent Meeting notices
- IST/RTI Meeting Documentation form

Feedback from the RTI coordinators has indicated that they have been able use existing documents from the site to create resources and/or modify existing documents to meet the needs of their schools. They noted that document sharing ensures that district secondary schools are consistently utilizing the most up-to-date documents. IRSD district instructional staff monitor and update the site with RTI resources when appropriate.

### **School and Board Presentation**

An electronic presentation of the foundations of RTI has been developed and can be modified to include school-specific information. The purpose of the presentation is to provide a transparent illustration of the basic foundations of RTI and the potential impacts of the interventions on students. Schools have been encouraged to share this presentation with their respective staffs at the beginning of the school year. Secondary schools used the presentation, or portions of the presentation, to share RTI information with staff. As intended, most schools modified the presentation to align with their school-specific programs. For example, SCHS modified the presentation to include their school-specific RTI schedule and programming. SCHS also included the curricula that will be used for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instructions within the school. The 27-slide presentation has allowed schools to easily train teachers on the fundamentals of

secondary RTI. Because this presentation was developed for the schools, the principals did not need to take time from their busy schedules to design a presentation for their teachers. Moreover, the presentation ensures that the information is delivered consistently among all schools. A similar presentation was developed for the IRSD Board of Education. Although this information was not presented to the entire Board, it was presented to several members of the Board during a monthly curriculum meeting. The question and answer session that followed the presentation allowed me to provide further clarity on how district schools support the academic needs of students through interventions. I am confident that both the individual school and Board presentations have helped to foster a better understanding of RTI in the IRSD.

### **Monthly RTI Meetings**

During the second half of the 2015-2016 school year, regular secondary RTI coordinator meetings were conducted as a result of findings that indicated that consistent support for secondary school implementation was needed. These meetings were led by the IRSD secondary literacy specialist. The role of this district RTI lead evolved as an effort to further support RTI initiatives of district secondary schools. The meetings provided a forum for the coordinators to discuss current and future secondary RTI programming. The coordinators seemed to appreciate the opportunity to discuss RTI as a whole and to share their school-specific concerns and questions. Schools were able to improve RTI operating procedures based on information shared within these meetings. Topics of the meetings included a review of RTI processes, the status of current reading and math interventions, guidance and tools used to support interventions, Tier 2 and 3 entrance and exit criteria, and progress monitoring tools and procedures. Comments on the RTI Schoology site indicate that the coordinators'

dialogue during the meetings has been rich and helpful. Comments include praise for the development of the site, and the dialogue back and forth is evidence of the increased communication among RTI coordinators. Thoughts and resources have been shared regularly after their meetings. The monthly meetings have continued into the 2016-2017 school year.

### **RTI Policy**

The IRSD Board of Education adoption of this policy helps to ensure that RTI is implemented with fidelity throughout the district. The policy and accompanying procedures are a quick reference guide on how RTI should be implemented within all schools. This policy will allow for a stronger level of RTI accountability within the schools. Through my experience as a principal, I know that a great deal of emphasis is placed on compliance with policies. The fact that this policy will be reviewed and monitored annually will help to ensure that appropriate intervention support is provided to the students of IRSD. To date, the district has not had to reference the policy to validate secondary RTI expectations. Schools seem to now understand programming expectations. It is my hope that the adoption and review of the policy with principals has contributed to thoughtful programming considerations over the last year.

## Chapter 5

### **REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS**

IRSD has made significant improvement in its secondary school RTI programs over the past two years. Our district made a number of wise decisions that helped move our work forward.

First, IRSD used the AIR Fidelity Implementation Rubric (Center on Response to Intervention, AIR, 2014) to set expectations and assess current program status. This decision to use a standard rubric to review RTI programming within schools was an effective way to organize the review of existing programming and to drive expectations for schools. It also helped to depersonalize the feedback on existing RTI programs. I would recommend the use of the rubric for districts that are in the early stages of RTI program development. The rubric can be helpful with initial program assessments. The rubric can also be used to chart program progress and to collect data on what is working and modifications that may be needed.

The IRSD Board of Education's adoption of the RTI policy helped to reinforce our commitment to fully meet state RTI expectations. I would recommend that districts adopt their own RTI policy to ensure that programs are implemented consistently. Districts who implement this policy should include the relevant elements of the state code, including the criteria associated with each tier and the frequency and duration aligned to each level of support. The policy and procedures should be used to drive the current and future evolution of RTI programming within schools. The adopted policy can also be referenced to support RTI recommendations and expectations.



Creation of an online district RTI site was generated from feedback provided during principal and RTI coordinator meetings. The specific contents can vary from district to district. We include the following in ours: Instructional Support/RTI process quick reference guides, record sheets for student data, process checklists, intervention checklists, documents used to support RTI progress monitoring assessments, and documents used to support program evaluation. These documents save schools substantial time because they do not need to recreate their own documents and procedures. In addition, the website helps to ensure consistency in procedures across schools and is an electronic platform for ongoing RTI conversations. Continual updates should occur as procedures are added and/or revised.

Schools have also continued to look at the schedules that have been created to provide intervention services to students. While working with the RTI leaders within each school, it was clear that modifications to existing schedules occur on a regular basis, but some schools are now looking to construct entirely new schedules around the intervention classes that are offered through their respective RTI programs.

Potential schedule considerations include:

- A 20-30 minute advisory periods
- The addition of a period within the high school
- Double blocked math classes
- Academic reading and writing classes
- Small group pull-out and push-in for reading and/or math
- School wide reading strategies

Schools should determine the type of schedule that works best for their population of students. When making this determination, administrators should

consider the success of previous schedules, the impact on the other required classes and the school-day time parameters. District and neighboring secondary schools have implemented various schedules and there is certainly no schedule that will work with all situations.

An effective RTI program requires ongoing district support. This support likely encompasses a number of traditional district-level departments such as curriculum and instruction, assessment, and budget. Rather than assigning only one department responsibility for RTI, we looked for opportunities for different departments to partner together to support school-based teams. School based teams will need help in meeting curricular, professional development, assessment, and fiscal needs. IRSD's RTI partnership was developed through the formation of monthly secondary RTI coordinators' meetings. These meetings provided a forum for the respective coordinators to not only discuss the processes in place but to also obtain resources and support. I would recommend this level of collaboration for any district. Districts with more established RTI programs may be able to meet less frequently, but collaborative sessions should still occur

As with any program, continual evaluation of the program must occur. The IRSD Department of Instruction has taken the lead to assure that an annual evaluation of program fidelity will occur. District evaluations of RTI programs should include an analysis of the following components of RTI to determine effectiveness:

1. Assessments utilized to determine students who are classified as "at risk."
2. Assessments utilized to determine student progress while receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions.

3. Processes in place to determine student placement in and out of tiers.
4. Data to determine student progress and movement up and down within tiers.
5. Curricular materials and the effectiveness of interventions utilized in each of the tiers.
6. Infrastructure and support within the school (leadership, professional development, schedules, resources, communication, teamwork).
7. Overall fidelity to the program. Are schools following the RTI policy and are staff aware of the RTI options within the school?

Each of these components is considered within the AIR RTI Fidelity rubric.

These areas cover the initial stages of RTI when students are identified for the program, stages during the RTI process when students transition between tiers, and the overall structure of the program. In addition, an evaluation of an RTI program should look closely at the intervention curricula and the overall impact of the curricula on student progress.

Although much progress has been made, there are some aspects of support that I would reconsider. The assessment of the current status of RTI programs (using the AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric) was conducted independently by me. In retrospect, the inclusion of a member of the IRSD Department of Instruction would have made this process more sustainable. The majority of the work conducted within schools for students within the RTI program is grounded in the work of the IRSD Department of Instruction. While my efforts ultimately produced upgrades to the program and professional development for staff, I evaluated the programs from a compliance perspective. I looked to the schools to answer much of my clarifying questions, especially in relation to curricula and data analysis. Not only did this impact the time spent during interviews, but it required many additional conversations with district

instructional staff. A member of the Department of Instruction could have answered these questions and would have been able to provide a perspective of existing curricula. Fortunately, a member of this department now oversees secondary programing; however, I think there was redundancy in some of our work along the way. If this individual and I collaborated from the start, we could have operated more efficiently and increased the likelihood of a consistent evaluation process moving forward. Districts and schools interested in using a rubric to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of current RTI programs should involve multiple members of their team. I would recommend including staff who are involved with instruction, assessment, data analysis and/or compliance. The collaboration and recommendations of this team approach will likely enhance the depth of feedback provided to the school and will include members that are most knowledgeable of the support options available.

In addition, I think an understanding of interventions and supports conducted within secondary schools outside of Delaware may have helped to provide a different perspective of how to provide intervention supports to middle and high school students. As I traveled the state and talked to RTI leaders in Delaware, I felt as though I was creating a comprehensive snapshot of how to implement RTI – based on information gathered from those who had implemented RTI for a longer period of time. In retrospect, because Delaware is such a small state, where everyone seems to communicate about programing, I likely received an accurate depiction of how Delaware schools interpret the RTI laws, but I did not expose myself to strategies outside of Delaware. Exposure to schools that have a long/successful history of implementing intervention programs may have helped to provide a broader perspective of RTI options. Secondary schools in Delaware have only recently begun

formalized RTI programs. A look at how RTI is implemented in other states may provide the necessary information about innovative ways to implement intervention programs. One common area of discussion among the RTI teams in which I visited was the challenge of scheduling intervention sessions. A broader perspective of intervention schedules would provide additional options for schools. In the future, I would suggest that school, or district teams, visit schools beyond Delaware to learn more about how their programming could enhance RTI while working within the confines of the state mandates. Communication with schools that have a long history of a systemic intervention program within the middle and high school would likely provide the most valuable information.

An area in which I uncovered a need, but did not spend a great deal of time, was the process by which schools analyze student data. As indicated by the RTI implementation rubric scores, not all secondary schools had developed a clear process for data analysis and data-based decision making when determining tier placement for students. Through the district-developed documents and the online platform for sharing site, schools now have consistent instructions on RTI processes and a means for sharing; however, I did not find information shared related to the specific data-review procedures. Because data analysis is an element of RTI that determines whether students transition among the three tiers, proper scrutiny is important. If done again, I would insist that significant time be devoted to assuring that schools have a clear understanding of the importance and processes of RTI data analysis. I would also recommend professional development for teachers involved with the RTI data analysis process, once the analysis criteria have been established. Professional development should clearly outline the range of possible scores that would qualify students for Tier

1 or 2 and the implications of scores on student learning. The training should further assist schools with the understanding of how screening data can be used in concert with other classroom data to help drive future intervention programming for students.

Limited analysis of student outcome data associated with the math intervention curricula occurred. An improved perspective of the success of the intervention curriculum would include student outcome data. The What Works Clearinghouse is a resource that can be used to determine the effectiveness of intervention programs. Unfortunately, there was no available feedback for the intervention curriculums that were reviewed by me and the district staff.

In all, I found the schools to be very accepting of my involvement in analyzing their RTI programs, although I worried if my presence and analytical view of their programs was an intrusion. During the interview process and during subsequent principal and RTI coordinator meetings, much time was spent discussing programming and potential improvement measures. I sometimes asked myself: Is this the best use of their time? Are they finding this feedback valuable? Will the schools implement the changes that have been recommended? The fact that state mandates were in place helped to answer these questions, but the main driving force was the fact that RTI programs are grounded on the principle of providing support for students in need of help. Reminding myself of this helped me to maintain focus. Regardless of the opinions of the school teams, if my work focused on providing support for schools so they may ultimately support the academic needs of their students, then my efforts were worthwhile.

#### Next Steps

The adoption of an RTI policy is an assurance that RTI should be implemented in all schools. In order to ensure that the IRSD programs are sustainable, fiscal and

personnel resources will be required annually. A staff unit will need to be allocated for a district staff member to facilitate ongoing RTI programming. In my opinion, an RTI leader within each building is essential. Fiscal support will be needed for purchasing additional core curricula as well as for ELA and mathematics interventions. With impending budget cuts, IRSD will face the very real challenge of sustaining their RTI programs with little to no financial support. Fortunately, I have found through my work that school RTI programs over the last few years have moved from a novelty program to one that is as common as typical reading and math classes. Schools now know that if an RTI coordinator position is eliminated, the work of that coordinator must continue with some other existing member of the staff. I am confident that, regardless of the staffing situation, schools will continue operate effective RTI programs within their buildings. In fact, I think because of the recent focus on RTI, schools will not only maintain their RTI programs, but they will continue to make enhancements.

The district must continue to monitor the progress that has been made and insist that programs are implemented with fidelity and evolve accordingly. Regardless of the financial situation within the district or state, the process of annual, rubric-driven, evaluations will help to determine program effectiveness. If needed, the evaluation can be conducted by members of the district office, or even the school's administrative team. Because the ongoing emphasis in education of reaching all learners, RTI will continue to be a program that serves a very valuable purpose and programming will need to be analyzed and subsequently enhanced accordingly.

As part of the ongoing analysis of the RTI programs, the district should also analyze the core curriculum, often associated with Tier 1 of RTI programs. The

effectiveness of the core curriculum is vitally important to overall student success. In fact effective core instruction will likely decrease the number of students who need Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. The district has recently adopted two new core curricula for ELA and math. Due to the infancy of the programs, little student outcomes data is currently available. Once meaningful data is available, it will be important to analyze the data to determine the effectiveness of the curricula. IRSD conducts data analysis throughout the school year and at the close of the school year. According to the Director of Instruction, analysis of the curriculum will consist of an evaluation of student outcomes on standardized assessments, summative classroom assessments and formative teacher evaluations. The Department of Instruction is currently conducting “learning walks” with a standardized tool to evaluate the fidelity of curricula implementation. In addition, members of this department also participate in professional learning communities to gather feedback about the curriculum. These processes will help the district to make decisions about the overall effectiveness of the Tier 1 curricula.



## Chapter 6

### **REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The University of Delaware's Doctorate of Education program has been a tremendously positive experience. As someone who lives in southern Delaware, the decision to participate in the University of Delaware's doctoral program versus a program within my hometown was difficult. As I near completion of this journey, I can honestly say that I know that I made the right decision.

I experienced many great life changing events during my enrollment in the program. When I began the program, I was a new father. As I progressed, my family expanded with the birth of my twin daughters. In addition, I changed positions in the IRSD several times. When I started, I was in the first few years of my role as a principal; I then transitioned to the district office. At the district office, my roles expanded substantially each year and included compliance, accountability, assessment and special education.

As I worked to develop RTI as the principal of SCHS, I was the primary leader of change. Once I moved out of the building, my role shifted from the primary change agent to the facilitator. Fortunately, my superintendent recognized the progress that had been made and my commitment to the foundations of RTI and empowered me to assist secondary schools as they worked to either implement RTI or refine current programs. The doctoral program was my support system as I made my transition from a principal to a district office director. The knowledge that I learned through class and

through conversations with classmates helped me to attack projects and issues strategically.

Through the program, I have developed and refined my scholarly abilities. Specifically, I have learned why and how to use data and research to support the decisions that have the potential to drive change within my district. I always knew that this was a best practice, but through my experiences within class, I now truly understand how to support an argument through data and literature. Explicitly, I can recall a conversation with the newly developed IRSD Autism Committee. Although the team had many great ideas about how the program should look and the curricula that should be in place, no one was able to produce data that could support their argument. I challenged the committee members to take their ideas and return to the next meeting with data to support their belief. I encouraged them to research programs and curricula that were well-established and to analyze data from those programs to support, or refute, implementation within IRSD. In the months to follow, the many great ideas were reduced to a few that were supported by data produced over time. Once challenged to justify the various components of the program through data analysis and research, the team was able to progress in a manner that was data-driven. The team shared findings related to the types of sensory stimulation that is available in successful classrooms, communication programs that have proven successful and student-to-teacher ratios that maximize learning. The district is now in the process of redefining the programming offered to students with autism and the curricula and supports that are offered. This level of work aligns perfectly with my new role as the Director of Special Services.

My leadership ability has also developed during my time within the program. Prior to the University of Delaware doctoral program, I would define my leadership style as more authoritarian than any other. Through my work as a principal at the onset of my time within the program, I lead through providing direction, oversight and feedback. I did not spend a great deal of time collaborating with others. In my opinion, this was my preferred leadership style because I did not think there was a great deal of time for collaboration. I wanted change and progress to occur quickly and an over-emphasis of collaboration and input would slow the ability to improve. As I evolved during the program, I found that my leadership style evolved to a more democratic style. Class content and discussions helped me to realize that it was important to involve multiple stakeholders in the decision making process. This style allowed me to make decisions with multiple perspectives in mind and helped to increase ownership from the team. This became ever important as I worked with multiple school teams to increase the effectiveness of their RTI programs. I knew very quickly that district-level guidance would not be effective if I simply tried to dictate the direction without seeking input from the members of the team.

An area of my professional practice that has been most impacted by my experiences within the University of Delaware's doctoral program was my comfort with developing a new Indian River Evaluation System. The development of the new system was a combination of projects and initiatives that have been ongoing since spring 2016. As part of the development of this evaluation system, I conducted surveys, coordinated committees, gathered input and support from various stakeholders, and developed numerous presentations. Each of these activities and skills were refined during my time within the program.

Dr. Buttram's evaluation class taught me how to conduct a valid survey and how to analyze the data received. During the individual MMS evaluation process and the interview process associated with the evaluation of all secondary schools using the AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric, I used the strategies learned in that class. I analyzed the survey process and considered options for data analysis, both strategies that I had not fully considered prior to Dr. Buttram's class. I also learned the proper way to organize the data to fully illustrate findings. This was a very important strategy when considering the analysis of state assessment data, math intervention curriculum options, RTI policy analysis and IRSD evaluation criteria.

Dr. Hodges' policy class empowered me to consider how district policies and procedures influence operations. The analysis of the various procedures associated with the new evaluations systems can be attributed to the emphasis placed on detail within Dr. Hodges' class. As I examined the important procedures that would be needed in order to accurately implement the program, I considered the conversations from class and how each word has a meaning and can be interpreted in different ways. I knew that the importance of policies and procedures is to limit the ambiguity associated with implementation. With the concepts of the Dr. Hodges' class in mind, I developed procedures for the new evaluation system that were accepted by the teachers and administrators of IRSD with little question.

Dr. Archbald's class taught me the significance of developing a presentation that tells a story and is aesthetically pleasing. This benefited me greatly as I presented to teachers and district leaders. Each time a presentation was created I carefully considered my audience and developed a presentation that would properly illustrate my message.

Dr. Lawson's Public Relations class helped me to better understand the importance of communication and messaging. With this in mind, I knew that I must include members of the IRSD teachers' union as I planned and pitched the idea of a new evaluation system. In addition, public relation skills were extremely important when meeting with building principals and teachers to convince that additional evaluations were a good strategy.

Through Dr. Lawson's and Dr. Hodges' I also learned to recognize the political landscape within IRSD, within Delaware and nationally. In order to choose the best path for influencing change associated with the evaluation process, I considered the skills learned within these classes to influence the leaders who would provide support for a new evaluation system.

Through the implementation of the skills harnessed from my experiences with the program, the new evaluation system was accepted by a vote of over 75% of IRSD union members. The work in this area continues, and the system has the potential for adoption in a much larger capacity. In December 2016, I will be presenting the newly implemented system to a group of DOE staff and principals from across the state.

The doctoral classes have helped me to grow in other areas professionally. Political posturing was something from which I had purposefully distanced myself in the past. I now understand that familiarity with information about all stakeholders within and around my organization is important. For instance, I now follow the local educational blogs and the IRSD Facebook page. Each of these media sources provides me with insight into how others view educational initiatives. This information has allowed me to proactively prepare for parent questions and concerns. While working with parents as the district initiated Smarter testing for the first time, I was able to

anticipate parent concerns related to opt out initiatives by following the rhetoric that was published through the local blogs. This practice will certainly help to drive my decisions with communication and program development in the future. In many of my classes our discussions would not only lead to the various decisions that would need to be made within our organizations but also to the reasons for those decisions and how the stakeholders in and around our organizations impacted those decisions.

This ELP portfolio experience allowed me to collaborate with members of the schools' RTI teams, members of the IRSD Department of instruction, teachers, administrators, members of the board and leaders from across the state. The relationships fostered through this process have opened the door to future collaboration. In addition, I have developed lasting relationships with members of my University of Delaware cohort. Ryan Fuller and I collaborated constantly about the program and administration in general during our trips to and from Newark. As Ryan became an assistant principal and principal we have kept in touch and have collaborated with each other from time to time. Keisha Brinkley and I share a special bond not only because of our cohort, but also because our ELP paths shared the common theme of RTI. We have talked regularly about our artifacts and our findings. In short, this process has provided me with an opportunity to connect with many members of the district and state and has thus provided me with the opportunity to grow professionally and personally.

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## **Appendix A**

### **DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECONDARY RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL**

#### **Overview**

As the Indian River School District's (IRSD) Director of Compliance and Accountability, my role includes providing support and guidance to principals and schools as they implement federal, state and district programs. A current priority is Response to Intervention (RTI), recently mandated by the state. From my district position I can provide guidance and support for RTI implementation by reviewing relevant research and best practices, developing selected RTI program elements, and evaluating first year RTI implementation. Also, because of my district-level role and perspective, I can coordinate among schools to share resources and "lessons learned" as RTI implementation progresses. This ELP describes, reflects on, and provides documentation of my role in planning and guiding RTI implementation in the district's secondary schools.

#### **Organizational Context**

The IRSD is located in southeastern Sussex County Delaware. IRSD was formed in 1969 and is geographically the largest school district in the State. The district covers over 360 square miles. The IRSD is home to two comprehensive high schools, Sussex Central High School (SCHS) and Indian River High School (IRHS) and three middle schools Georgetown Middle School (GMS), Millsboro Middle School (MMS), and Selbyville Middle School (SMS). The mission of the IRSD is to

“assure that students attain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to realize their potential, meet the challenges of their life choices, and fulfill their responsibilities as citizens of the State of Delaware, United States and world through a partnership of students, parents, staff, administrators, Board of Education and community.”

The principle goal of the Indian River School District is to accelerate achievement and improve outcomes for all students with:

1. Rigorous standards, curriculum, and assessments.
2. Sophisticated data systems and practices.
3. Effective teachers and leaders.
4. Deep support to lowest-achieving schools.

Each of these goals is directly linked to the importance of identifying and supporting the most academically at-risk students within the district schools. RTI will offer a more systemic approach for addressing this need. Table 8 illustrates more detailed information about each secondary school. As indicated in the table, the schools are currently at different phases of RTI implementation. The middle schools have all begun RTI implementation and are working to refine their current programs. The high schools, although implementing various aspects of RTI over the last several years, are developing their programs now. Diversity at each school is clearly shown within Table 8 which is why the implementation of RTI will be an important aspect of meeting the needs of all students.

Table 8            IRSD Secondary School Data

|                       | Indian<br>River H.S. | Sussex<br>Central<br>H.S. | Georgetown<br>Middle | Selbyville<br>Middle | Millsboro<br>Middle |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Grades                | 9-12                 | 9-12                      | 6-8                  | 6-8                  | 6-8                 |
| Enrollment            | 900                  | 1300                      | 600                  | 700                  | 650                 |
| African<br>American   | 13%                  | 15%                       | 15%                  | 13%                  | 15%                 |
| Hispanic              | 13%                  | 30%                       | 47%                  | 16%                  | 14%                 |
| White                 | 70%                  | 50%                       | 32%                  | 64%                  | 61%                 |
| Low income            | 30%                  | 45%                       | 50%                  | 35%                  | 45%                 |
| Special<br>Education  | 14%                  | 14%                       | 15%                  | 15%                  | 16%                 |
| ELL                   | 2%                   | 6%                        | 5%                   | 2%                   | 2%                  |
| RTI<br>implementation | developing           | developing                | Year 2               | Year 1               | Year 2              |

Secondary schools within the IRSD offer a variety of curricular options. At both high schools, the college preparatory and general education curriculum accommodates the majority of the students; however many students participate in Advanced Placement and Honors classes. The district's middle schools offer an array of elective courses to complement their core classes. In addition, SCHS, GMS and MMS offer the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program to specially-selected students across all grades. AVID's website notes that the program develops learning, study and academic behavioral skills. "It acts as a catalyst for schools to develop a culture of college readiness for all students across the campus." District schools recruit students for this program who have the potential to attend college, but who may not have a full realization of their potential or means for attending. Students in AVID are often first time college goers in their families. Recently, SCHS added the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. IB's website describes the program as one that helps to develop the intellectual, personal, emotional

and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world. The program has a very structured process for selecting students who meet the rigorous criteria of the program. Currently, almost 50 students are enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade IB program. IRHS has developed a strong STEM program that is aligned to Project Lead The Way. The STEM program offers opportunities for students to earn college credits. In addition, there are a variety of Career and Technical Education program offerings from which students are able to select career pathways at each secondary school. The entire IRSD have adopted the Common Core State Standards.

Tables 9-13 outline Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) reading and math historical data since the 2010-2011 school year. As illustrated, there have been years when a significant percentage of students have met proficiency levels and years when, in one school, over 40% of the students did not meet proficiency levels. In most cases, between 20%-30% of students are not meeting annual proficiency levels in reading and math.

Table 9    Percentage of 10th grade students meeting DCAS proficiency at SCHS

| Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading      | 71%       | 71%       | 72%       | 68%       |
| Math         | 66%       | 71%       | 68%       | 59%       |

Table 10 Percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting DCAS proficiency at IRHS

| Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading      | 74%       | 88%       | 85%       | 88%       |
| Math         | 71%       | 84%       | 77%       | 77%       |

Table 11 Percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting DCAS proficiency at MMS

| Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading      | 74%       | 78%       | 80%       | 73%       |
| Math         | 71%       | 85%       | 78%       | 69%       |

Table 12 Percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting DCAS proficiency at GMS

| Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading      | 66%       | 75%       | 72%       | 74%       |
| Math         | 73%       | 83%       | 87%       | 80%       |

Table 13 Percentage of 8th grade students meeting DCAS proficiency at SMS

| Subject Area | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reading      | 72%       | 85%       | 73%       | 81%       |
| Math         | 78%       | 89%       | 78%       | 77%       |

Each high school has made a number of attempts to provide students with support over the last few years. Supports have included flexible scheduling, double blocking math courses, Academic Reading and Writing (ARW) courses, online math courses, student advisory periods and after school programs. While these programs have each yielded varying degrees of success, they have typically been enacted independently and not part of a universal school RTI plan that is governed by the policies and procedures outlined within RTI. Thus, the schools were unable to fully gauge the ability of the respective program to positively impact the school as part of a comprehensive RTI program.

### **Problem Statement**

The nationwide trend to increase levels of school accountability has challenged districts to build programs that will allow schools to best meet students' diverse instructional needs. RTI has become a popular and mandated framework for addressing this challenge. Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code indicates that "each public agency shall establish and implement procedures to determine whether a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions for reading and mathematics." The RTI action network defines RTI as a multi-tier approach to support the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. RTI can not only be used as a tiered approach for intervention but also as a tool for

determining whether a student has more intense needs such as a learning disability. “RTI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by child outcome data” (NASDSE, 2006). Hill, King and Lemons (2012) suggested that RTI has the potential to enhance the ability of secondary schools to improve student academic performance.

**My Education Leadership Portfolio will focus on how to provide district-level support to secondary schools initiating their RTI programs.** Mac Iver and Farley-Ripple (2003) acknowledge that proponents of school-based management would argue that instructional practices and curricular decisions should be left to the school leaders; however they also question whether schools have leaders who have the knowledge to adequately support good instructional practices. IRSD district-level supports have focused on Common Core alignment and, as a result, not on RTI. Because resources have not been specifically allocated for RTI implementation, schools have been saddled with the challenge of planning and implementing their own programs. Schools were told that RTI implementation is a must; however, minimal district resources were available to support their efforts. While leaders of the district’s secondary schools recognized the need for intervention, they struggled to determine where to find the time and resources to effectively plan for such an intense program. In secondary schools, the need for effective models of delivering intervention to struggling readers is readily apparent (Heller & Greenleaf 2007). Canter, Klotz and Cowen (2008) note that effective RTI implementation will require significant planning and leadership from administrators.

## **Improvement Goal**

Schools should provide a learning environment that accounts for the various learning styles of the students. This means that they must provide supports (or interventions) for struggling learners. Simply allowing the student to continue to struggle without changing the instructional strategies is not acceptable. A systemic approach to instructional differentiation is now a must if educators desire to meet the needs of all students.

At the close of the 2013-2014 school year, many of the IRSD secondary schools did not have a whole-school approach to RTI. Although the schools provided intervention classes for at-risk students, afterschool programs, and small group pull-out, there was no process by which teachers could work collectively to identify at risk students, assign interventions, and increase or decrease the level of support based on progress monitoring. Unlike the RTI tiered approach in which a team reviews the progress of individual students and monitors progress regularly, the intervention classes provided assistance on a wholesale basis. Moreover, the afterschool programs provided extra support for all students, not just those identified as the most at-risk. While an instructional support team was in place to review at-risk student information and develop plans for assistance, the plans required students to fail to meet proficiency levels within the general education curriculum and/or on the state's standardized test *prior* to the intervention.

IRSD secondary schools need a plan that screens students and identifies deficiencies, prior to general education failure. My challenge is to provide guidance and support as district secondary schools begin to plan for and implement a strategic RTI plan. The district middle schools have planned to implement a screening system for all students. They plan to use the data to schedule students in intervention classes



that will range from 30 minutes to 45 minutes depending on the respective schools. SCHS intends to implement a more detailed plan during the 2014-2015 school year while IRHS plans to rollout full implementation during the 2015-2016 school year. Because SCHS is starting RTI for the first time this year, they will be a focus for support during the 2014-2015 school year. Lessons learned and resources developed during the first year of implementation will be used for future planning for secondary RTI within the district.

Because much of the research associated with RTI implementation has occurred at the elementary level, the path to RTI program development within secondary schools, especially high schools is largely uncharted. According to Fuchs, Fuchs and Compton (2012), many researchers avoid RTI middle and high school studies because of the scheduling complexities and compliance issues often arise when working with adolescents. Supports from the district level will be needed in order to most effectively develop such a program. According to Mac Iver and Farley-Ripple (2003), two of the components of the role of the central office are to support good instructional practices through professional development for principals and teachers and to evaluate the feedback loop from evaluation to decision making. In my opinion, supports should take place during the *initial planning*, *program development*, and *year one implementation*.

During the *Initial planning* stage, I will assist with fostering stakeholder support. In order for appropriate implementation to occur, the school's various stakeholders will need to have a clear understanding of the reason for, and the benefits associated with, an intervention and/or enrichment period. This information should be presented by district office staff in a logical manner. Presentations should outline the

latest research including national and local programs that have experienced success. A review of the DDoE's online RTI portal will be extremely helpful during this process. If staff members know the benefits of the site, they will be able to better plan for the program.

District-level support during *Program development* will be informed by the lessons learned from earlier implemented RTI programs in secondary schools in both Delaware and across the United States. The district office will need to ensure that appropriate resources are allocated, including fiscal and personnel support. In order to maximize support, district office staff will assist with the identification of RTI best practices and support ongoing professional development in a number of areas. Development of a master schedule will be important; the schedule must allow for intervention time and flexible grouping. Even more important, research by district office staff on the various reading and math intervention options will be vital to the decision-making process. Viable reading and math intervention options up for consideration should be presented to the school's RTI team. Professional development should occur prior to implementation and throughout the school year. District office personnel should be responsible for the ongoing professional development in this area so the leaders of the school can focus on the adopted core curricula and Common Core State Standards.

During *Year one implementation*, district support will review the initial implementation of the program. Schools will need support to evaluate data related to student and program progress. Assessment of the program during year one implementation will be critical to identifying areas that need improvement. Intervention data will be crucial to effectively grouping and regrouping students.

### **Organizational Role**

Currently, I am the IRSD's Director of Compliance and Accountability. As part of my responsibilities, I oversee principals and schools as they implement federal, state and district programs. My role is not to simply audit schools for compliance but to also provide support and guidance throughout the process of program implementation. I am able to tap district and school resources to ensure that programs are instituted and implemented in the most efficient manner possible. As the former principal of SCHS, I am aware of the current programs and the impact of the introduction of a new comprehensive program. Additionally, I have experience with leading large scale initiatives and monitoring program success. My exposure to the diverse student population at SCHS has helped shape my awareness of the need to provide differentiated instruction to advance the growth of at-risk students.

In addition to my compliance duties, I am also responsible for the implementation and oversight associated with the new Delaware System of Student Assessment (DeSSA). My knowledge of DeSSA will help me to guide SCHS and other district secondary schools as they structure their RTI systems in a manner that is consistent with accommodations and supports that are offered during standardized testing. I will also have access to data associated with all elements of testing throughout the year, including RTI screening data. The RTI data will help me to better understand the trends associated with student progress.

Along with my current organizational role, my administrative background has helped prepare me for RTI support. Several years ago, while an assistant principal at North Georgetown Elementary, I was able to participate in a year-long RTI training followed by first-year implementation of RTI. The lessons I learned during training and implementation were invaluable. Not only was I exposed to practical

examples of how RTI can be implemented, but I was also able to experience how a mindset shift is needed from the school's stakeholders. In my opinion, the most valuable lessons were learned "on the fly" as the teachers and staff of North Georgetown Elementary adjusted to an entirely new way of providing supports for struggling learners and for identifying students for special education. Many teachers, especially the more veteran teachers who were accustomed to simply "testing" the student who was not successful within their classes, struggled to understand that their instruction had to be modified prior to making any special education considerations. I think this knowledge will be valuable when working with the secondary RTI teams.

### **Description of Planned Artifacts**

1. Millsboro Middle School Evaluation Report (program development phase).

During the 2013-2014 school year, I was able to evaluate many aspects of the recently modified Millsboro Middle School RTI program. Through this process I was able to garner information from the administration and staff and review the data analysis process used at the school. Impressively, the school has been able to evolve and mold the program into a model for other schools. The insight gained will be instrumental as I support the secondary schools with RTI implementation.

2. Secondary Response to Intervention Planning (program development phase).

During the summer of 2014, I was able to travel across the state to interview some of the most respected and knowledgeable leaders who have recently implemented RTI and/or who are systematically changing their model based on the lessons learned from previous years. Additionally, I conducted numerous phone conferences with leaders with whom I was unable to meet. The face-to-face and phone

conferences provided me with invaluable information. The candor exhibited during my discussions will hopefully enable me to advise the IRSD middle and high schools in a way that will place them in a position to avoid the mistakes that many schools made during initial implementation. I will provide a synopsis of my findings that can be shared with the schools as they develop their programs.

3. Literature review associated with methods of supporting RTI implementation within secondary schools and available online resources (initial planning phase).

A review of the most recent RTI literature will help me to gather knowledge related to RTI implementation, thus facilitating my ability to support schools. A deeper look into the methods of facilitating RTI programs within schools will help shape my methods for support. I will provide a summary of my findings. Additionally, I will note where to find resources and rate the usability of the various online resources (initial planning phase). The DDoE has done a remarkable job with updating the online RTI resources available to districts and schools. After speaking with Carolyn Lazar, DDoE staff member responsible for supporting RTI within schools, it was clear that the DOE preferred method of training associated with RTI is through online modules. I will provide a synopsis of the various resources available and their potential usefulness when planning for RTI implementation within secondary schools.

4. Board presentation related to the RTI process and the support/development plan (program development phase).

The final approval or disapproval of a school's RTI plan will come from the IRSD Board of Education. In order for the Board to fully support a plan, its members must be keenly aware of the processes and the benefits associated with a calculated plan. Moreover, the Board will be more likely to provide staffing and fiscal support for a program that they understand and that they feel will benefit students. I will

develop an ‘RTI plan for support’ presentation that can be shared with the IRSD Board.

5. Assessment of the Current Status of RTI in IRSD Secondary Schools (year one implementation).

During the 2014 -2015 school year it will be important for IRSD to closely monitor the various aspects of the program including ongoing professional development. This data will help to drive interventions and overall school programming. The areas of the program that I will monitor most closely will be:

- Impact of RTI on master schedule (principal interview)
- Professional development
- Data analysis (student progression through tiers)
- Student tier transition processes
- Parent communication

I will note the aspects of the program that seem particularly well suited for the schools and those that will need to be modified or removed. This information will be especially helpful for Indian River High School during their planning phases of RTI implementation scheduled for the 2015-2016 school year.

6. Secondary Principals’ Meeting Summary PLC (Initial Planning and Program development phase).

During the 2014-2015 school year, a portion of the monthly Secondary Principals’ meeting will be devoted to reviewing the development of district RTI programs. I will create an agenda and share the minutes associated with this portion of the meeting. The primary purpose of the PLC is to provide a structured forum for the principals to plan for an RTI program for the 2015-2016 school year. The identified

needs of the principals will help to drive the subsequent support offered to individual schools.

7. Selecting a High School Math Intervention Program (program development phase).

The district has developed a list of intervention options that may be used for math at the secondary level. I will review the research associated with each of these options. I will share the strengths and weaknesses of each program and outline the feasibility of implementation within the IRSD.

8. Development of RTI policy (program development phase).

Currently, there are no policies associated with the integration of RTI within the IRSD. Clear criteria and expectations associated with the implementation of RTI cannot be achieved without the backing of a policy. Presently, our policies associated with instruction help to dictate supports for struggling learners; however, a specific RTI policy is needed. I will develop a policy that will help guide the school and the district as they take on this new initiative.

#### **Summary of IRSD RTI progress at the start of the 2014-2015 school year.**

Each of the district's three middle schools established an RTI plan at the start of the 2014-2015 school year. Although each school exhibited obvious procedural and or curricular differences, they all worked towards the common goal of assessing students and providing intervention to struggling learners. The two high schools have both developed a system for screening and providing support to at risk students. Sussex Central High School, however, had a more developed plan at the start of the 2014-2015 school year.

### Millsboro Middle Schools

Millsboro Middle School scheduled a 45 minute block at the beginning of each school day to provide interventions to students who were found to be at risk based on reading and or math screenings. Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) were implemented with all students who did not meet tier 2 or tier 3 status. PALS were also used to support students identified as at risk based on the findings of the Scholastic Reading Inventory. The Read 180 and Math 180 curricula were used to provide support to the most at risk Tier 3 students at Millsboro Middle School.

### Georgetown Middle School

Georgetown Middle schools sets aside 30 minutes daily at the start of the school day to provide support to at risk learners and to provide enrichment activities to all others. The Tier 2 curriculum is exclusively teacher developed and is developed based on the needs of the student as identified by the Scholastic Reading Inventory and the teacher-created Math screener. The most at-risk students are scheduled into an additional Academic Tutorial class, which addresses both reading and math deficits. The Read 180 and Math 180 curricula were used to provide support to the most at risk Tier 3 students at Georgetown Middle School.

### Selbyville Middle School

Selbyville Middle School conducts a daily 30 minute enrichment period. Additionally, tutoring was offered on Tuesday and Thursday for students in need of more specific support. The school used the Read 180 and Math 180 curricula to provide support to struggling Tier 2 and Tier 3 learners.



### Sussex Central High School

After a Scholastic Math and Reading Inventory screening, Sussex Central High school organized a 30 minute block of time daily (Knightlife) which provided ELA interventions or enrichment. The lessons taught during this period of time were developed by an assistant principal and the school's instructional coach. All students except seniors were enrolled in a double block of math. At risk students received interventions while non-Tier 2 and 3 students received enrichment activities aligned with their regularly scheduled math course. The curriculum is both Kahn Academy and teacher developed.

### Indian River High School

Indian River High School screened all students using the Scholastic Math Inventory and the Scholastic Reading Inventory. At risk students were scheduled into intervention classes, which offered remedial support. The curricula associated with the intervention classes were primarily teacher developed.

## **Appendix B**

### **MILLSBORO MIDDLE SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT**

#### **Executive Summary**

Millsboro Middle School (MMS) began the implementation process of a Response to Intervention (RTI) program during the summer of 2012. The program was developed to meet the vast needs of the MMS diverse student population. The administrative staff and leadership team recognized that the school, although making significant progress over the last few years, was in need of a process to intervene with students unable to meet state mandated test benchmarks. My evaluation was conducted in the fall and winter of 2013.

The evaluation sought to answer a process and an outcome question to assess the effectiveness of the program's implementation procedures and the program's outcomes.

Process Question: To what degree has technical assistance provided teachers with a clear understanding of the program?

Outcome Question: Did 8<sup>th</sup> grade students benefit from the instruction they received during the RTI period at MMS?

During the professional development days offered prior to student arrival in August of 2013, the administrative team and leadership team developed training that would outline all aspects of the RTI process including curriculum development. In an effort to answer the process question, a survey was given to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers that provide reading or math interventions. The survey gathered teachers' perceptions of

the training provided to prepare them to instruct during the intervention session. Overall, the teachers felt that the training adequately prepared them for their RTI instruction. Details related to the survey are shared and recommendations for future professional development are provided.

In order to evaluate the outcomes of the program, Scholastic's Reading and/or Math Inventories (Scholastic, 1999) were used to collect baseline data and post-intervention data from all 250 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Baseline data indicated that the average score for math students was 731. The average Lexile for reading students was 837. After 10 weeks, all students were given a second Scholastic Reading and/or Math Inventory (Scholastic, 1999). The results were evaluated and students were regrouped based on their needs. Results of the second round of assessments indicates an average growth of 19 points for math students and an average growth of 73 Lexile points for reading students. Paired sample t-tests revealed that students' reading and math scores increased significantly from the start to the end of the 10-week intervention period

#### **Acknowledgment:**

I would like to thank the Millsboro Middle School teachers for their willingness to allow me to evaluate their Response to Intervention program. I would also like to thank MMS principal, Dr. Renee Jerns for her support, her candor associated with the program's implementation and her willingness to share her school's data. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Joan Buttram from the University of Delaware for her support and guidance associated with evaluation procedures and processes.

## **Introduction**

This evaluation was conducted to assess the Millsboro Middle School (MMS) Response to Intervention (RTI) program. The results of the evaluation will be used to inform the MMS administration of the effectiveness of the program's implementation and impact on students' reading and math abilities. The evaluation's findings will be used by both the school and district to refine existing and design future RTI programs in the Indian River School District (IRSD).

## **Description of the Program**

Meeting the needs of all students in a diverse middle school environment can be a daunting task. Middle school, for many students, is a time for self-discovery, for focusing on friends and for trying to find an identity. Often, excelling academically is quite low on the priority list. As in all schools, when students' priorities are not grounded by academics, programs must be put into place that will help students to maximize their potential.

With that said, MMS was determined to develop a program that identified struggling students and provided meaningful reading and math interventions. MMS's RTI program was implemented after the teacher and administrator expectations associated with their students' reading and math levels were consistently not met. Although the scores on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) were such that the school was recognized as making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the leaders of the school did not feel that sufficient supports were in place to meet the needs of the students who were falling below benchmarks.

The interventions of the RTI program are designed to provide Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) (Fuchs & Fuchs 1997) to students whose literacy skills

are below benchmarks and teacher-developed curriculum-based math interventions when math skills do not meet expectations. (See Figure 2 for a Logic Model associated with the program).

### Evaluation Questions

The process question and the outcome question associated with the evaluation were designed to help determine the overall effectiveness of the program. The process question – “To what degree has technical assistance provided teachers with a clear understanding of the program?” – is answered in large part by the responses of the seven teachers who participated in the online survey.

The outcome question associated with the evaluation – “Did 8<sup>th</sup> grade students benefit from the instruction they received during the RTI period at MMS?” – is answered through the analysis of the student reading and math inventory data. A comparison was made between baseline data and data gathered after the end of a ten-week intervention period.

### Methodology

#### Sample

The sample to answer the process evaluation question consists of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers implementing the program. There are currently eight 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers that provide interventions for reading and math. Seven of the eight teachers responded to the survey. The 200 8<sup>th</sup> grade students receiving interventions are the sample to address the outcome evaluation question. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade roster was reviewed after ten weeks, prior to data analysis to remove any students who have entered during the ten-week evaluation window. Additionally, any students who have been absent for ten or

more days were not included and not calculated into the analyses. In order to provide the intervention to all students, no control group was included.

### Instruments

A survey was developed to evaluate the processes associated with RTI program implementation. Attachment 2 outlines the MMS survey. Qualtrics software was used to develop, distribute and analyze the survey. The questions used a four-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree). The eight survey questions focused on the teachers' ratings of their ability to accurately teach the intervention curriculum, the amount of time dedicated to professional development related to the RTI program and their satisfaction with the program's processes.

The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) were used to measure the outcomes of the RTI program (Scholastic, 2010). The two inventories provided baseline Lexile scores for reading and Quantile® scores for math. After ten weeks of intervention, students were progress monitored online using the same SRI and SMI system. The SRI and SMI system provided information regarding the students' current ability level and their growth from the initial assessment.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The Qualtrics survey was distributed to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers participating in the RTI program. Teachers accessed the survey through an online link that was provided by email. Two weeks were allotted for survey completion. The Qualtrics system organized survey results so that the results for specific questions could be disaggregated by the teacher's content area.

The iTracker data management system was accessed to organize the SRI and SMI student data (Data Service Center 2015). SRI and SMI data was uploaded to the iTracker system to allow for analysis of growth between the baseline and the 10-week follow-up.

## **Results**

Eighth grade teacher survey respondents were first asked to note whether they provided interventions for reading or math. Additional survey questions were asked based on the specific area taught. It is important to note that those teaching English had a pre-determined program to be used during the intervention (PALS), while those teaching math were required to develop a new curriculum.

Table 14 summarizes teacher survey responses. Five of the seven respondents felt that the professional development provided during returning teacher week was effective in preparing them for RTI instruction. The two teachers who did not feel prepared were responsible for the math intervention in which they were required to develop their own curriculum. Three of the seven respondents believe that they needed additional resources to effectively teach during the RTI period; two of the three that disagreed were math teachers. All respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the time spent in the RTI period will increase literacy and math skills at MMS.

Table 14 Teachers' RTI survey ratings

| Item   | Strongly Agree | Agree       | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| The professional development provided during returning teacher week was an effective process for preparing me for RTI instruction. | 0<br>(0.0)     | 5<br>(71.4) | 2<br>(28.6) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time spent planning for the RTI period did not interfere with my ability to plan for my other content.                         | 1<br>(14.3)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 1<br>(14.3)       |
| I am prepared to teach the content I teach during my RTI period.   | 4<br>(57.1)    | 3<br>(42.9) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| 8 weeks is enough time to accurately assess a student's progress in the RTI period.  | 1<br>(14.3)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 1<br>(14.3) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time dedicated to students during the RTI period is well spent.  | 2<br>(28.6)    | 5<br>(71.4) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| I do not need additional support or resources to effectively teach during my RTI period.   | 2<br>(28.6)    | 2<br>(28.6) | 3<br>(42.9) | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| The time spent in the RTI period will increase literacy and math at MMS.   | 1<br>(14.3)    | 6<br>(85.7) | 0<br>(0.0)  | 0<br>(0.0)        |
| I collaborate with my colleagues when planning for my RTI period.  | 1<br>(14.3)    | 4<br>(57.1) | 2<br>(28.6) | 0<br>(0.0)        |

Note - N=7

SRI and SMI student growth data were analyzed to evaluate the program's outcomes. SRI scores are based on students' Lexile scores while SMI scores are based on Scholastic's Quartile Framework®. The students' baseline scores from each inventory were compared with their scores from the SRI and SMI assessments after ten weeks of intervention. MMS provided the student data after the completion of each assessment. Data indicates an average growth of 73 Lexile points for reading students and an average growth of 19 points for math students (see Figure 1). Paired sample t-



tests revealed that both sets of gains were statistically significant (SRI,  $p < .01$  and SMI,  $p < .02$ ).

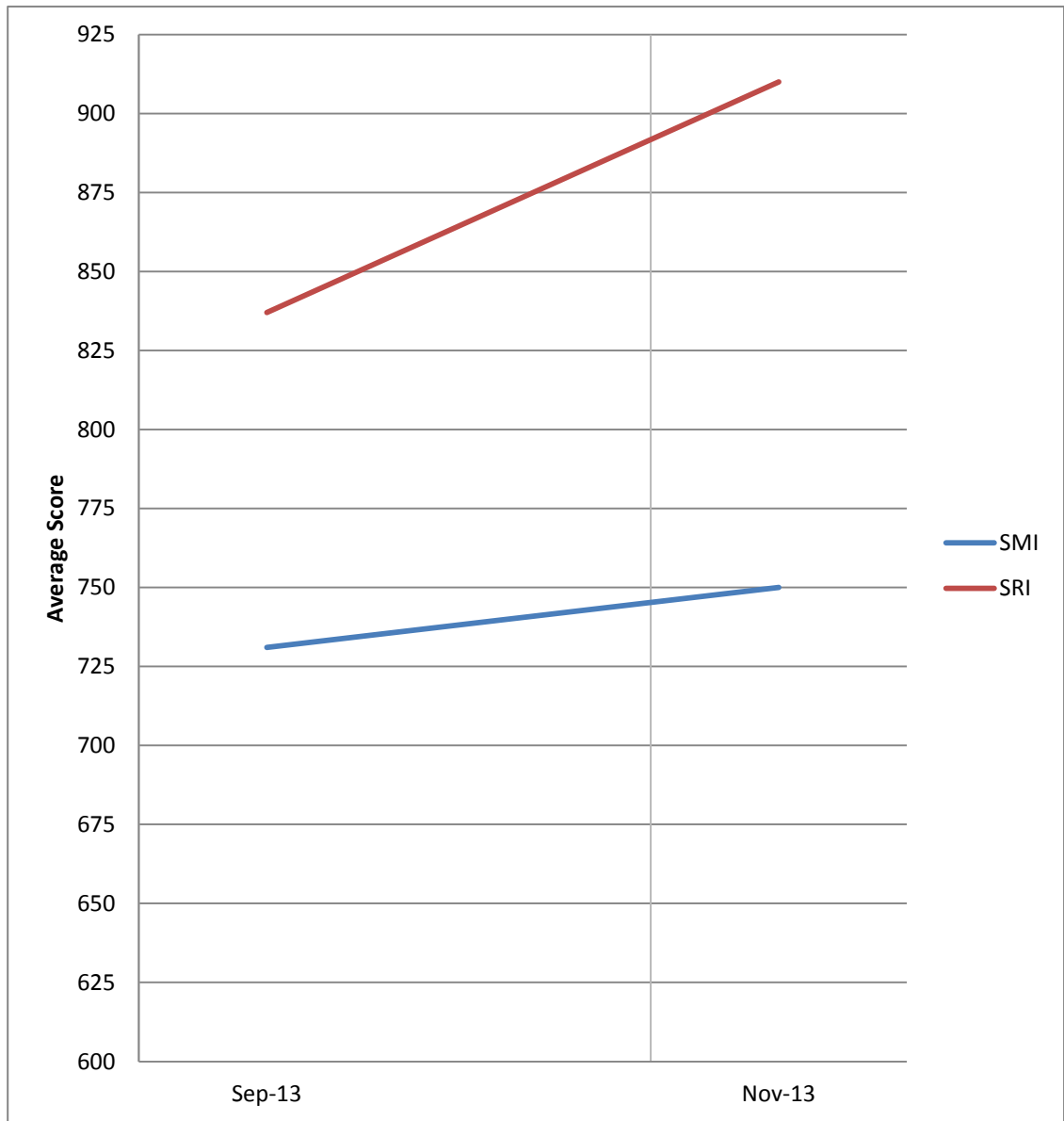


Figure 1 SMI/SRI Growth of Students Participating in PALS

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The findings from the evaluation demonstrate that the RTI program had a strong start during the 2013 school year at MMS. Reading teachers generally felt well prepared for their intervention periods while math teachers were less positive about their preparedness. Additionally, after ten weeks of interventions, students' made gains in both reading and math. Teachers' responses to the RTI survey are most likely influenced by the number of new programs and requirements facing them. In addition to RTI, IRSD has also implemented a new lesson planning template and the Common Core State Standards. These all put significant demands on IRSD teachers. As a result, some teachers may feel overwhelmed by the planning process associated with another initiative and this may have negatively influenced their responses. Although the vast majority of the responses within the survey indicate satisfaction with teachers' level of preparedness, the fact that some teachers disagree with certain items should be considered when planning for the future.

The following recommendations are made based on the above evaluation results.

- Provide additional time for planning and preparation for MMS math teachers during the summer or during returning teacher week.

Because these teachers must develop their own curriculum and because there have been no standardized strategies adopted for math, these staff members may need additional time to prepare.

- To evaluate overall teacher preparedness, MMS should survey the teachers providing intervention at the close of the year.

Teachers may develop additional or differing opinions about the program once the inaugural year of RTI is complete. It will be important to have a global

understanding of teachers beliefs at the end of the first year to best prepare for the future years.

- Identify the additional resources that may be needed to teach during the RTI period.

Three of the seven respondents disagreed that sufficient resources are available to effectively teach during the RTI period. A complete inventory should be made and where gaps are found, additional materials added for teacher use.

- Continue implementing interventions with fidelity and progress monitoring every ten weeks.

Although the math growth was not that of the reading growth, the full scope of the success of the program will not be realized until program completion in the spring.

- Review intervention strategies at the close of the year, specifically if less than a 75 points average gain occurs in reading annually.

As noted by Scholastic, on average, students are expected to grow approximately 75-100 Lexiles per year in reading. Math norms have not yet been developed. The evaluator recommends that the team continue to monitor the most current research associated with Scholastic math growth expectations.

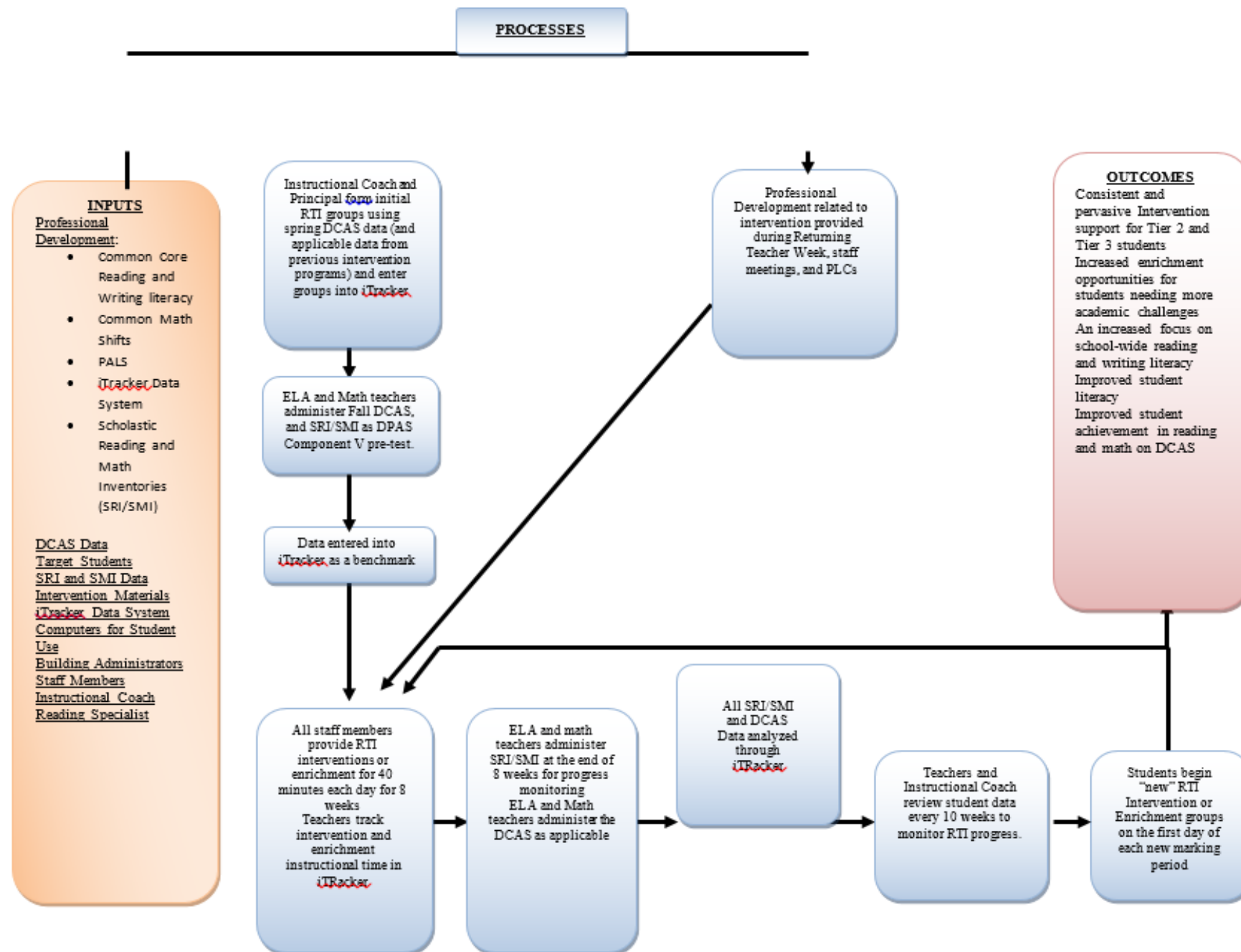


Figure 2 Logic Model

Attachment 1

**Millsboro Middle School RTI Survey**

Millsboro Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers,

My name is Jay Owens and I am the principal at Sussex Central High School. I am conducting a survey of the Response to Intervention program at your school. The purpose of the survey is to gain knowledge of the program so that it can be applied to the SCHS intervention/enrichment program. The survey is also being developed as part of a University of Delaware doctoral class in which I am enrolled.

The survey is anonymous and your data will only be used for my doctoral research and to plan for an intervention/enrichment program at SCHS. You are able to opt out of this survey if you are not interested in participating.

Agree - Strongly agree – Disagree - Strongly disagree

1. The professional development provided during returning teacher week was an effective process for preparing me for RTI instruction.
2. The time spent planning for the RTI period did not interfere with my ability to plan for my other content.
3. I am prepared to teach the content I teach during my RTI period.
4. 8 weeks is enough time to accurately assess a student's progress in the RTI period.
5. The time dedicated to students during the RTI period is well spent.
6. I do not need additional support or resources to effectively teach during my RTI period.

7. The time spent in the RTI period will increase literacy and math at MMS.
8. 8. I collaborate with my colleagues when planning for my RTI period.

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## **Appendix C**

### **SECONDARY RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION PLANNING**

#### **Description of Problem**

In compliance with state mandates, the Indian River School District (IRSD) is requiring all secondary schools to implement a strategic Response to Intervention (RTI) plan for secondary schools for the 2014-2015 school year. While intervention strategies are currently implemented within all district elementary schools, there are varying intervention plans in place at the two high schools and three middle schools. Although the secondary schools of the IRSD have made adequate yearly progress over the last few years, as identified by the Delaware Department of Education, systemic plans must be in place for students who continue to fail to meet benchmarks. Over the past several years, the district's secondary schools have incorporated many different intervention schedules and strategies, all of which have had varying degrees of success. Some of the strategies have included:

- A 20-30 minute advisory periods
- The addition of a period within the High School
- Double blocked math classes
- Academic reading and writing classes
- Small group pull-out and push-in for reading and/or math
- School wide reading strategies



Although various strategies have been implemented, at Sussex Central High School (SCHS), between 20% and 40% of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students receiving Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) testing have not meet proficiency levels in reading and math. At Indian River High School (IRHS) roughly 20% of the students have not meet state DCAS benchmarks. Additionally, Millsboro Middle School, Georgetown Middle School and Selbyville Middle School have exhibited inconstant levels of student proficiency. Between 20% and 35% of the middle school students have not met proficiency at the respective schools. A more streamlined plan for intervention at the secondary schools has the potential to positively impact the growth of students.

When RTI was mandated within elementary schools in Delaware seven years ago, I was an assistant principal at North Georgetown Elementary School and was charged with spearheading the implementation within the school. I experienced a year of intense professional development support designed to facilitate the successful implementation of the program. After the initial woes associated with the implementation of a new program, I saw the tremendous benefits associated with the concept at my elementary school.

As I transitioned to my new role as the Director of Compliance and Accountability, I was compelled to assist the district's secondary schools with the research, professional development and implementation of their RTI programs. Within this role I am responsible for monitoring and facilitating compliance with state and federal mandates. With that said, I will provide meaningful support for the district's secondary schools as they implement and/or refine RTI. Unfortunately, the level of professional development aligned to secondary school implementation of RTI is

significantly less when compared to the elementary school rollout. In fact, there have been no mandatory state-led secondary trainings. As a former high school principal, I know that it is very difficult to explore the research needed to make the most informed decisions about a program like RTI, including decisions related to the curriculum and professional development.

### **Internship Activity**

In order to provide the best level of guidance to IRSD administration, I decided to research local schools and districts that have already embarked on the RTI challenge. Additionally, I sought to gather available RTI information from the Delaware Department of Education. After visiting/interviewing four local schools and districts that had already implemented an RTI program, a district school that had implemented a program and the DOE chairperson for RTI implementation, I felt prepared to effectively advise the secondary IRSD principals.

### **The Challenge**

- To explore neighboring school and district processes associated with the implementation of an intervention period.
- To assess the “lessons learned” from secondary schools and districts that have implemented RTI.
- To collaborate with IRSD administration and the secondary principals to share insights and to develop a strategic schedule and PD plan for RTI implementation.

### **School Visits and Phone Conferences**

Prior to visiting each school or conducting phone interviews, I formulated questions that I felt would help to drive the discussion. Our discussions were quite in

depth and often transcended the questions asked. I experienced a great level of candor as each individual or group interviewed was willing to share aspects of the program that were successful and aspects that marred the progress of the program. Each organization or individual interviewed also provided me with documentation of written RTI plans, protocols, schedules or organizational documents.

#### Polytech High school

Polytech High School was visited on June 10th. Joining me during the visit was IRSD Supervisor of Secondary Instruction, Mr. Will Revels. During the visit, Principal Jason Peel and his leadership team systematically discussed their programming for the 2013-2014 school and outlined their processes for the development of the 2014-2015 programs. Fortunately, we were able to meet with the team on a day when they had been planning RTI options for the coming school year, thus we were privy to a very candid discussion associated with the strengths and challenges of the previous program and the steps taken to improve for the upcoming school year. The key findings are noted below. Questions and notes provided by the leadership team can be found within Attachment 1.

- Some non-core curriculum teachers, who were asked to teach ELA and Math, encountered anxiety because they were asked to teach subject matter that was less familiar to them. Highly scripted curricula were advised by the Polytech team if teachers are asked to teach outside their subject area.
- Multiple intervention curriculum options are recommended. According to the Polytech team, the students seemed to appreciate the options afforded to them with a menu of options. They felt that teacher developed curricula have the potential to best meet the needs of the students because they are most aligned to student needs.
- If Springboard is used as an intervention curriculum, all staff should be trained. Polytech struggled with a train-the-trainer model. Although

Polytech felt that the Springboard curriculum was valuable when used as an intervention, the staff desired a greater level of training, especially during the first year of implementation.

- A standard scheduled time within the school day for intervention allows for an eclectic mix of curricular options. The Polytech team noted that some teachers were able to develop curricula specific to their subject area and specific to the needs of their students. Because interventions were occurring school wide at a set time, all teachers could be involved, thus increased flexibility for the scheduling of students and programs.

#### Millsboro Middle School

The second school visited was Millsboro Middle School (MMS). On June 12<sup>th</sup>, I spoke with principal Dr. Renee Jerns. She inherited an RTI program two years ago and is planning to modify the program to better meet the needs of the school. She offered lessons learned and the positives and negatives associated with the old and new program. The key findings are noted below. Questions and notes provided by Dr. Jerns can be found within Attachment 2.

- Planning for the intervention period is one key to the period's success. She noted that she and her leadership team proved a great deal of professional development for the intervention period prior to the start of the school year. She shared that the teachers had the opportunity to develop lesson plans and collaborate prior to student arrival in the fall.
- The PALS program has been successful in the past when used as a reading intervention, but there is a concern that more strategic supports are needed if the school wants to continue to meet the specific needs of their students. According to Dr. Jerns, MMS felt as though the PALS program is more of a structured reading time and does not support the vast reading needs of their learners.
- In order to place teachers in the best position for success, a master schedule that supports an intervention period must be in place. Dr. Jerns indicated that the sooner the schedule is shared with the staff the better. The teachers can begin planning once they know the timeframes available to work.
- Flexible grouping will allow for the school to maximize supports and staff. Dr. Jerns believes that if the school wants to best meet the needs of the

students they have to be able to adjust when the time is right for the students. She noted as her team plans for the upcoming school year they will explore schedules will maximize opportunities to flexibly group students.

#### Milford's Central Academy/High School

On June 17th, I visited with Nancy Carnavale, former curriculum supervisor for the Milford School District and one of the developers of Milford High School's RTI program. Mrs. Carnavale was instrumental in the development of Milford High School's 2013-2014 RTI program. This visit was very insightful in that she shared a wealth of knowledge regarding the amount of preparation that is involved with the planning and implementation of a strategic RTI plan. Milford's plan is one of the more extensive plans researched. I have outlined the key finding below. Questions and notes can be found within Attachment 3.

- Providing students with multiple choices for interventions is appealing to the students but is extremely time consuming and difficult to schedule. In my opinion, this was one of the major strengths of Milford's program. They seemed to have successfully incorporated many curriculum options for the students. One drawback to this plan is that a staff member will need to be assigned to RTI for data management and scheduling. Mrs. Carnavale felt that an RTI chairperson is essential to program success.
- Achieve 3000 is highly recommended as an ELA intervention program. Mrs. Carnavale willingly shared many of the capabilities of the program visit. She shared the available reports and the ability of the program to organize the student data in an understandable report. I was able to accurately see the full capabilities of the program.
- Allowing core content teachers to teach "support" classes was thought to be very worthwhile for remediation. She noted that these teachers have direct knowledge of their curriculum, but more importantly that have the most insight into the deficiencies of the student as it relates to their content area. The teachers are able to collaborate by department and develop intervention lessons that can meet the specific needs of the students.

- According to Mrs. Carnavale, data collection every six weeks is a big endeavor. She noted that the magnitude of data that must be reviewed is daunting, but the real challenge is re-scheduling students within the eschool system based on their course selections and intervention requirements. Instead, she recommended a review of the data every 8-10 weeks.

#### Colonial School District

On July 10<sup>th</sup> I conducted a phone interview with Mrs. Lori Duerr, Manager of School Improvement, for the Colonial School District. Mrs. Duerr was strategically selected for questioning because she previously worked within the Department of Education and was instrumental in the rollout of RTI for the elementary schools, she has a great deal of knowledge associated with the implementation of RTI. Mrs. Duerr was very open and honest during our discussion regarding the progress made within RTI and the challenges that remain. I have outlined the Colonial School District's findings below. Questions and notes associated with Mrs. Duerr's interview can be found within Attachment 4.

- The assignment of students to core content teachers for intervention during a standard block of time seems to work best for the Colonial team. The fact that the core content teachers are teaching the curriculum ensures that the content experts are delivering the specific instruction to the students.
- The district currently uses "Catching Kids Up with LFS" and Read 180 as intervention curricula. Although her district is happy with these programs at this time, she noted that it is important to continually evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention program and to be open to new more effective intervention curricula.
- Mrs. Carnavale noted that double blocked math at the high school level will allow for strategic support. Essentially, students are scheduled into two math courses so they can receive either intervention support or accelerated instruction.
- The district's high school will soon offer an academic strategies class to complement the RTI program.

## Cape Henlopen High School

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, I conducted a phone conference with Dr. Mike Young, assistant principal and Mr. Brian Donahue, Principal. Cape Henlopen embarked on year-one implementation of RTI last year. The planning for the programming stemmed from the work conducted by Dr. Young during his doctoral research. I have outlined the key information shared below. Dr. Young and Mr. Donahue provided me with a frank synopsis of the success and challenges associated with year one implementation of RTI. I have outlined the key finding below. Questions and notes can be found within Attachment 5. An outline of their current schedule can be found within Attachment 6

- The Cape team created a daily “skinny” block for the 2014-2015 school year that provides 25 minutes of intervention each morning. Although they are currently pleased with their program, they will solicit feedback from their staff and make adjustments where needed.
- Dr. Young and Mr. Donahue suggest that schools consider the timeframe between progress monitoring screenings. Too little time will not allow the team to gather accurate growth results, nor does it afford students with the opportunity to maximize the time spent receiving the most appropriate level of intervention. Contrary, too much time spent between progress monitoring screenings risks subjecting students to intervention strategies that may not meet the appropriate level of intensity for an unwarranted amount of time.
- In an effort to maintain transparency associated with a new RTI program, it is important to raise stakeholder awareness regarding the program, especially when changes to the schedule are imminent. The Cape team presented to their board when they felt that they had developed an adequate plan that was in the best interest of the students.
- Fiscal support is needed for the purchase for intervention curricula. This was an area of great emphasis for Dr. Young and Mr. Donahue. Not only is there potential for monetary needs associated with the programs, but there are also potential needs for staffing.

## Delaware Department of Education

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, I conducted a phone interview with Ms. Carolyn Lazar, Education Associate within the Office of Assessment at the Delaware Department of Education. Ms. Lazar eagerly shared her knowledge surrounding RTI with me and accepted my request to attend the RTI sub grant committee debriefing workshop in September. This group will discuss the “lessons learned” from the past school year of RTI implementation while also sharing the methods for grant expenditure. Seventeen schools were awarded sub grants and implemented RTI during the 2013-2014 school year with the support from the grants. Highlights from Ms. Lazar’s interview are illustrated below and questions and notes can be found within Attachment 7.

- DOE oversight of RTI will soon be embedded in the work of the Teaching and Learning Cadre. The Cadre will begin to focus on the efforts of RTI in all schools.
- On September 8, 2014 each of the 17 sub grant schools will meet to review their findings from the school year. This will be an opportunity for districts to collaborate about the work with RTI that has been accomplished over the last year.
- The Department is still working on the trainings that will be provided, however schools have been encouraged to use the online modules found within the DOE website. A review of the online portals yields promising training opportunities. The modules are comprehensive and standardize the information that is delivered to schools and districts.

### **PELP Framework Considerations**

RTI encompasses many aspects of the Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University (PELP) framework. In a joint initiative of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Business School, the framework “is designed to help district leaders identify the key elements that support a district-wide improvement strategy, bring those elements into a coherent relationship with the strategy and each



other, and guide the actions of people throughout the district in the pursuit of high levels of achievement for all students.” Because RTI is a systemic program that involves the entire school, wholesale changes in mindset and organizational structure are essential to program success. Below, I have outline the direct impact associated with each element of the PELP framework.

Theory of Change – *If students are provided strategic intervention supports, academic performance will improve.* I believe that each of the schools visited, and the individuals that I interviewed, believe in this change theory. The vision and passion for improving student learning resonated loudly from the teacher and leaders who worked to develop RTI programs within their respective schools and districts. There was a sense of pride in the time and energy devoted to the development of programs that they felt would positively impact students. Moreover, those interviewed seemed to feel as though the RTI process was a way to ensure that all students were provided the support needed to maximize potential, regardless of prior academic performance.

Teachers and leaders should not be the only individuals passionate about the theory of change. In order to maximize the potentials of RTI, all stakeholders, including the students will need to believe in the theory that the right interventions will lead to improved academic performance and that is a fundamental goal of the schools to maximize students’ potential.

## Instructional Core

### Teacher knowledge and skills

Because Tier 1 of RTI occurs in all core classrooms and is intended to impact all students, a teacher’s knowledge of content and pedagogy should be sound. Thus, training associated with the most appropriate pedagogical approaches is essential to

ensuring that teachers are equipped to meet the vast needs of the learners in their classrooms. Schools and districts must plan for regular professional development, professional learning communities and feedback in order to assist teachers as they continually grow their pedagogical knowledge. Improved or enhanced teaching strategies have the potential to not only improve learning during the teachers' core content classes, but also during their intervention instruction. Schools and districts should also foster opportunities to enhance educators' knowledge of their content, especially when the content is new to the educator. Professional development and/or additional coursework are the most common methods for providing enhanced knowledge in ones content area. An important component of evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional core is the monitoring of the teachers to ensure that rigorous teaching strategies are occurring in all classrooms; otherwise schools run the risk of inaccurately placing students into Tier 2. Additionally, teachers must receive adequate exposure and training related to the curriculum that will be taught during the intervention period.

#### Academically challenging content

This aspect of the instructional core remains to be seen. Intervention curricula such as Khan Academy and the PALS strategy will be analyzed by me, the Supervisor of Secondary Instruction and the Director of Instruction over the course of the 2014-2015 school year. If the programs do not generate adequate student growth, the IRSD should explore other research-based intervention curricular options.

## Stakeholders

Students, parents, teachers and IRSD board members will all benefit from a strategic intervention plan. It will be very important to increase awareness surrounding the program among all stakeholders. As noted throughout my visits and interviews, stakeholder awareness is essential to initial implementation. None of the stakeholders involved should be surprised when the RTI program is initiated within the schools. Transparency regarding all aspects of the program will hopefully generate support throughout the implementation process. **Students** and **parents** should be made aware of the RTI program as soon as the program has been developed and schedules are available. It has been my experience that parents will be most interested in how the changes may positively impact their child, while students will be most interested in how their schedule will be impacted. Information can be shared during open house events or through workshops. Students should be trained on the concepts of RTI and how the programming can benefit them and those around them. **Teachers** should be on the planning committee that helps to develop and analyze the success of the RTI program. Those teachers who are not on the committee must be informed of the new program, or changes to the existing program as soon as possible. **Board Members** should be made aware of the potential positive impact on students because of the implementation of an RTI program. They should also be aware of the changes that will be made to the school's schedule due to the implementation of RTI. Board members can be kept abreast of this information through board meetings or board committee meetings.

## Strategy

The IRSD recognizes that the successful roll-out of secondary RTI will be crucial to the overall success of the program. The strategies involved with roll-out in the schools and the districts interviewed all involved collaboration among school personnel, usually the Leadership Teams and district office staff. In my opinion, an eclectic mix of minds typically will prove beneficial when trying to anticipate potential problem areas. All those interviewed agreed that after garnering stakeholder support, the first phase of the roll-out should focus on the development of a schedule that supports the RTI three-tiered approach. Once the schedule is in place, focus must then turn to *what* will be taught during intervention classes and *how* it will be taught. District office support will be essential in each of these areas, as the schools will want to ensure that the curricula associated with the intervention classes are aligned to English and math standards.

## Culture

As district secondary schools develop strategic RTI plans, considerations will need to be made regarding the effects on student and staff culture. For instance, students may be discouraged if an elective class is replaced with an intervention class. In an effort to curb negative reactions, schools should educate students on the potential positive impacts of RTI. Many of the schools interviewed acknowledged that time was given to educating students about RTI. Additionally, any time a staff experiences a change in schedule, anxiety should be expected. Based on the lessons learned from my visits and interviews, special attention should be given to considerations related to teachers instructing outside of their content area, as this seemed to be an area that

created a great deal of anxiety. The leaders of the building, and district, must adequately advise and train staff to minimize the negative impact of the change.

#### Structure/Systems

Scheduling and staffing systems are the nucleus of the RTI structure. A master schedule that will adequately support an intervention period is one of the drivers of program success. As noted by those interviewed at the school level, the time allotted for program implementation and planning should be constantly monitored and evaluated. Each of the schools interviewed are making changes for the second year of implementation. Many of the changes are related to the structure of the RTI schedule. Additionally, a system for data collection and reporting will need to be in place in order to best accurately evaluate the progress of the students. The system should allow for teachers to easily input student data while also providing clear reports that can help support decisions made about a student's programming. A good data management system is recommended by those that participated in my research. The IRSD will utilize the existing iTracker data management system for this purpose.

#### Resources

Financial resources and curricular resources are recommended prior to RTI implementation. Determining how to incorporate RTI without additional staff, or funding, was a hurdle for many of the schools interviewed. Although additional staffing is not always feasible, a designated coordinator and adequate teaching staff are advised. IRSD administration should confirm the availability of staff and curricular resources annually. In the near future, it appears that secondary schools within the IRSD school district will need to prepare resources associated with Khan Academy and PALS curricula.

## ISLLC Standards Addressed

### Standard 1

*An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.*

The development of a comprehensive RTI program is at the heart of Standard 1. In order to help all students reach their full potential, the leaders within the school must promote fidelity to the core curriculum with needed differentiation (Tier 1), plan for and support differentiated instruction (Tier 2 and 3), articulate the plan and vision to the school's stakeholders and evaluate the success of the program. By providing the district and school leaders with the latest trends and strategies associated with RTI, I feel that I am giving them the tools that are needed to effectively fulfill the beliefs of ISLLC standard 1.

### Standard 2

*A school administrator is an education leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.*

Initially, this standard should be addressed through a strategic process for RTI curriculum identification. Time should be spent researching programs that will best meet the needs of the district's students. Standard 2 is also addressed through support offered by the administrative staff and RTI coordinator. A common recommendation among those interviewed was that oversight and assistance from an RTI coordinator will be one of the keys to RTI success. In order for the high schools to be able to ensure that the programs are functioning as intended, a few key recommendations have been made:

1. Provide ongoing professional development.
2. Evaluate the success of the program frequently.
  - i. Conduct learning walks with feedback.
  - ii. Analyze data with PLC's in accordance with the agreed upon frequency schedule.
  - iii. Allow the instructional leadership team to provide feedback throughout the year regarding the success and challenges of the RTI schedule
3. Provide an RTI coordinator that can assist with the organization of data and scheduling.

#### Standard 3

*A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.*

In order to ensure the success of the RTI program, the district staff and school administration must respect the time(s) associated with the RTI period. Each of those interviewed discussed the importance of dedicating a specific time frame for the intervention to occur. The administration must value this time by developing a schedule that is inclusive of this period and safeguarding this time from interruption and distraction. This point should be made clear at the start of the school year and throughout the year. If the time is free of distraction, the staff and students will understand the value of RTI.

#### Standard 4

*An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.*

As indicated by the Cape Henlopen High School Principal and Assistant Principal, communication with the school's stakeholders is one of the keys to program success and sustainability. The school administration and district office staff should ensure that the board of education, teachers, parents and students are all aware of the benefits of and the programming associated with the implementation of a systematic RTI program.

#### Standard 5

*An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.*

The leaders of the school and the district must be honest with the successes and challenges of the program during the course of year one implementation. In fairness to all involved, most importantly the students, if the program is not generating adequate student growth, changes must be made. As noted by each of the schools interviewed, they all have made changes since year one implementation. Some of the changes were substantial, especially when changing established curricula. Likewise, their willingness to change in spite of the work that had to occur and the work that must continue is admirable and is a testament to the integrity of the leaders within the schools and districts.

#### Standard 6

*An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.*

*With the ideals of standard 5 in mind, school leaders must advocate for funding associated with program. Adequate program implementation will be difficult*



if fiscal resources are not allocated accordingly. The school board will need to be kept abreast of the progress of the program so there are no surprises if/when needs arise for additional resources.

In my opinion, two of the primary levels of supports that an administrative staff can provide to their teachers are a schedule that is conducive to the school's vision and professional development associated with curricular expectations. In this case, the high schools administrative staffs within IRSD need resources in order to best prepare for the introduction of an RTI program. Once teachers have an RTI schedule and a curriculum associated with their intervention class, they will be able to move forward with planning.

In summary, all findings were shared with Dr. LouAnn Hudson, Director of Instruction, and Mr. Will Revels, Supervisor of Secondary Instruction, of IRSD. Dr. Hudson was pleased learn of the many lessons learned from the visits. She was eager to assist in the pursuit of curricula that can be used during intervention classes. She also recognized the significant work that is needed to adequately plan for an RTI program, thus she was appreciative of the scheduling options that are available for the schools to consider. Dr. Hudson's department will play an integral role in the monitoring of each school's RTI program. Mr. Revels used my findings to help to advise the coordinators within the Department of Instruction. He indicated that the lessons learned from the school visits and the research associated with RTI best practiced helped him to plan for and advise his coordinators and school leaders. Additionally, I was able to collaborate with the principal Bradley Layfield of SCHS extensively as the master schedule was developed and staffing considerations were made. As a new principal of a comprehensive high school, and a novice to the RTI

process, Dr. Layfield indicated that he would welcome all support offered with the implementation of a new RTI program. When collaborating with Bennett Murray, principal of Indian River High School (IRHS), he welcomed the new ideas associated with the implementation of an RTI program. With the researched information in mind, Mr. Murray plans to include as many aspects of the program as possible during the 2014-2015 school year; however, he believes that full implementation of the program will necessitate the transition to a block schedule. Currently, IRHS has a 7-period day and the implementation of a block schedule will likely occur during the 2015-2016 school year.

In order for the district to best prepare for secondary implementation of RTI for the 2014-2015 school year, I made the following suggestions for “next steps:”

#### Next Steps

1. Ensure the accurate implementation of Common Core State Standards. The ability to impact the entire student population will take place at the Tier 1 level with effective core curriculum implementation. Tier 1 instruction will likely have one of the largest impacts on the success of the student population. A strategic professional development plan should be outlined for the 2014-2015 school year.
2. Fully explain the reasoning behind the implementation of RTI within the school to appropriate stakeholders (students, teachers, parents and Board of Education). As indicated by several of the administrators visited, staff training on RTI is essential to program success and sustainability.
3. Train staff on the look and feel of the new schedule. Because this will be a change for all staff, it will be important to adequately train the stakeholders. The greater the level of awareness, the more likely the staff will be willing to embrace the new schedule.

4. Fully train appropriate staff on the curricula that will be used during the intervention period.
5. Provide professional development to support the pedagogical needs of the staff. A strong repertoire of instructional strategies will help students in all Tiers of RTI.
6. Develop a plan to continually evaluate to success of the program. One suggestion would be to include a review of the programs strengths and weaknesses during weekly instructional leadership meetings.

#### Impact of my internship on the District

After visiting and interviewing leaders, I now have an RTI knowledge base that can be used to help to advise administrators within the IRSD. Much more than ever before, I am able to anticipate and respond to various questions related to RTI when they arise. My hope is that the secondary schools will be able to utilize my expertise to help them with planning their RTI programs, thus creating a more responsive environment for struggling students. Moreover, the schools should be able to spend less time planning for the RTI explanation as I have created a presentation with all pertinent information. Schools can simply input their specific schedule and intervention information.

#### Personal Reflection

I am tremendously pleased with the amount of information that I have amassed over the course of the last several months. I feel as though I have fully immersed myself into RTI and the various processes that it encompasses. With that said, I am most proud of my ability to work with Mr. Will Revels, Supervisor of Secondary instruction. Mr. Revels was able to accompany me on two of my school visits. Additionally, after I conducted phone conferences, I was able to share my lessons

learned. These lessons learned enabled him and the district principals to make more informed decisions regarding programming and upcoming professional development offered to both Indian River and Sussex Central High Schools.

**Polytech High School**

RTI visitation

June 10, 2014

1. What was your greatest success with RTI this year?

We were pleased with our ability to provide support for many of our struggling students. We were also pleased with the fact that we had a curriculum to follow but we will do things differently next year.

2. What were your greatest challenges?

The impact of the extra prep on teachers was a big challenge. Planning for the intervention period, if done right and taken seriously, took a lot of additional preparation.

3. What curriculum was used at each grade level and with each tier?

We used Springboard. We will utilize a few different “teacher-created” curricula next year.

4. What professional development did you provide your staff to prepare for RTI?

A train the trainer model was used after staff attended Springboard training. According to the leadership team, this model did not go well. They recommend that all staff receive training.

5. Do you have a specific staff member that is responsible for RTI coordination?

The director of instruction, Dr. Sharon DiGirolamo, assisted with the implementation of the program.

6. How is your master schedule developed to support RTI? Is there flexibility for students to move between tiers?

We have developed a 4 X 4 block. Students receive 1 elective pass/fail credit.

7. With the lessons learned this year, what are your plans for RTI next school year?

One enrichment period will be included in the master schedule. The period will be  $\frac{1}{2}$  the length of a regular class period.

- 9th grade students rotate through each of the technical areas.
- 10th and 11th grade students will participate in Springboard math and reading curriculum. The curriculum will ensure that students have access to reading and math throughout the entire year
- 12th grade students are assigned to an English teacher where they will work on their senior project, Technical Exhibition, or Master of Technology Diploma.
- AP Spanish, Band, Yearbook and expanded COOP/Clinical are also options for enrichment.

Attachment 2

**Renee Jerns Interview**

Millsboro Middle School

June 12, 2014

1. What was your greatest success with RTI this year?

We were able to provide supports for many students. Collaboration among the teachers was tremendous. We are pleased that so many students were able to grow from the supports offered.

2. What were your greatest challenges?

We are unsure if PALS is our best option for ELA intervention. We think it may be time for a more strategic ELA program.

3. What curriculum was used at each grade level and with each tier?

ELA – PALS

Math – Teacher created

4. What professional development did you provide your staff to prepare for RTI?

Teachers were trained on how to administer the SRI and SMI and how to effectively incorporate PALS. Additional supports were provided as needed throughout the school year.

5. How did you screen your students? How did you screen tier 2 and tier 3 students?

SRI and SMI were used as the screening tool.

6. What is your process for data collection?

We used the Itracker data base to organize our data. Teachers, primarily during their PLC's organized their data into the Itracker system.

7. How have you organized your schedule to support RTI?

We provide 40 minutes at the beginning of the day that is devoted to RTI support.

8. What changes will you make as you move forward?

We are going to allow grouping across teams and across grade levels. We feel that if we can place the students in the most appropriate intervention group, regardless of their team or grade level, we can maximize our ability to provide support. We are still exploring new ELA curricula.



**Nancy Carnavale Interview**

Milford High School

June 17, 2014

1. What was your greatest success with RTI this year?

The ability to offer diverse programs to the students was probably the biggest success of the program. Students began to buy-in after the third rotation of the schedule.

The team also felt very strongly about the success of their intervention curriculum for ELA, Achieve 30000. She recommended purchasing and using this system in any secondary school.

2. What were your greatest challenges?

The fact that students had to be rescheduled every 6 weeks was a huge challenge. The frequency of the changes required a great deal of maneuvering within the eschool system and the scheduling was very time consuming.

3. What curriculum was used at each grade level and with each tier?

All core subject teachers were required to provide a “support” class to students who are not maintaining a 75% average in the class.

- a. Teacher-developed
- b. Achieve 3000 – ELA
- c. Accelerated Math

4. What professional development did you provide your staff to prepare for RTI?

Ms. Carnavale and the administration shared the plan with the staff in August prior to the school year. There was not a great deal of training as Achieve 3000 and Accelerated Math are fairly self-explanatory. The teacher-developed curricula were appreciated by the teachers because

they could cater the curriculum to the needs of the students enrolled in the class.

5. How did you screen your students? How did you screen tier 2 and tier 3 students?

STARR was used as the screening tool.

6. What is your process for data collection?

One teacher tracked reading and one person tracked math. Nancy and Cathy Rios scheduled students into eschool every six weeks.

**Lori Duerr**  
Manager of School Improvement

Colonial School District

RTI Phone Interview

July 1, 2014

1. In your opinion, what direction is the state heading with secondary RTI?

I am not aware that anything official has been sent out. 2013-2014 was supposed to be full implementation. I don't think the guidance is on anyone's radar. Michael Watson put out a grant a while back to try to get a restart around the secondary schools. Grants were given to some schools and were monitored. Sara Celestein is heading up the grant implementation - RTI was given to a non-secondary person.

2. How is your district implementing RTI this year at the secondary level?

Four years ago at the middle school a block of time was built in for enrichment. The data used was STAR data. Progress monitoring tools were not in place but ongoing assessments were used at the school level. Compass math was used at one school - the school's math coach provided the intervention. The schools saw a great deal of progress during initial implementation. The middle schools eventually moved to a model where the coaches were training the teachers. The same gains were not met with that particular model. At the high school, "Catching Kids Up with LFS" and "Read 180" was used to provide intervention. Core content teachers taught the intervention classes. The school blocked out time where struggling students were assigned to a core teacher for support. The second year it was not provided and scores went down. The high school is moving to an "academic strategies" classes. Every teacher will be given a block of time where they go into the core classes to provide extra support. Ninth grade double math blocks are provided. A Four block year-long schedule allows for increased support for math. The school will identify the needs of the students from classroom data.

3. How was RTI introduced/rolled out to the secondary schools?

The schools were told that they must incorporate RTI. They should be using data to make their decisions and to develop groups. The district provided program strategies to identify struggling students. Or district purchases programs that are research based and agreed upon by the schools. The district provides a framework on what to do and the schools are given the flexibility to develop the plan.

4. What were your lessons learned from previous implementation?

There are lessons learned every year. The high school changes and tweaks every year.

5. What curriculum was used at the secondary level with each tier?

Read 180 and Catching Kids Up with LFS

Attachment 5

**Brian Donahue/Mike Young and Cape High School**

RTI phone conference

June 10, 2014

1. What type of RTI support is needed from the district office?
  - a. Principal Donahue would like guidance regarding what to do with the rest of the students that do not need RTI.
  - b. Currently they have created a student support “skinny” class that is 25 minutes.
  - c. The class occurs every morning except for Monday.
  - d. Utilizing a PSAT and an SAT prep course. Money is needed for these purchases. Professional development related to the courses would also be helpful.
2. What were your greatest challenges during the 2013-2014 school year?
  - a. Support is needed to let the various stakeholders know what is happening with the schedule surrounding RTI.
  - b. Gaining buy-in from non-ELA and Math teachers. Non ELA and Math teachers struggled with the fact that they would need to assist with Reading and Math instruction during the RTI period.
  - c. Monetary support from the district office.
3. What curriculum was used at each grade level and with each tier?
  - a. 9th and 10th grade utilize SRI/SMI while incorporating silent and sustained reading.
  - b. College and career readiness created by the counselors for 11th and 12th grade students.

- Students complete college applications, research colleges and/or career and complete general college and career information provided by the guidance counselors.

c. Compass learning did not work because of the short period of time.

d. District support was provided with the creation of classes and data input. Every nine weeks, information was changed in eschool and updated into iTracker.

\*The administrators would like for the time frame of the intervention to extend to 12 weeks.

4. What professional development did you provide your staff to prepare for RTI?

a. Training in the curriculum areas

b. Training for staff on the importance of RTI.

5. How did you screen your students? How did you screen tier 2 and tier 3 students?

a. DCAS was used during the 2013-2014 school year.

b. STAR Math and STAR Reading will be utilized for Tier 2 students in the future.

6. What is your process for data collection?

a. iTracker data management system.

7. Do you have a specific staff member that is responsible for RTI coordination?

a. Assistant principal Mike Young. "A point of contact for the data and processes is very important."

8. How is your master schedule developed to support RTI? Is there flexibility for students to move between tiers?

a. Yes. A skinny block was developed to facilitate the time needed for intervention.

9. Are you concerned about students arriving late because they do not value the intervention period offer at the beginning of the school day?

a. Teachers need to follow up when students enter late.

b. We let the attendance policy take care of itself. Students can earn a quarter credit for the elective.

Attachment 6

**CAPE HENLOPEN HIGH SCHOOL**

**2014-2015 REGULAR SCHEDULE**

**ODD/EVEN SCHEDULE MONDAY – FRIDAY: ROTATING**

Breakfast 7:35 AM – 7:50 AM

Announcements 7:55 AM – 8:00 AM

SSAP/RTI 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM

Period 1 or 2 8:35 AM – 9:55 AM

Period 3 or 4 10:00 AM – 11:20 AM

Period 5 or 6 11:25 AM – 1:25 PM

**Lunch Schedule**

| “A” Lunch | “B” Lunch | “C” Lunch |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 11:25 AM  | 12:10 PM  | 12:55 PM  |
| 11:55 PM  | 12:40 PM  | 1:25 PM   |

Period 7 or 8 1:30 PM – 2:55 PM



Attachment 7

**Carolyn Lazar**

DOE, Teaching & Learning

July 22, 2014

1. What is your current position?
  - a. The DDOE lead for RTI.
  - b. Oversees the 17 secondary sub grant schools.
  - c. DDOE has an RTI committee
2. What are the Department of Education's expectations with secondary RTI this year?
  - a. This year the department hopes to re-launch expectations through the cadres and share out the expectations. Information is expected within the next month regarding the inclusion of RTI within the cadres.
  - b. Eventually the department will review the framework and ensure schools are meeting the 80% (Tier 1), 15% (Tier 2), and 5% (Tier 3) expectations.
  - c. September 8th is the date for "lesson's learned" regarding the sub grant schools. Information will be shared from all the schools.
  - d. Schools will also report on how the funding was spent.
3. What kind of training will the Department provide for districts and schools?
  - a. Still some work around if training will increase, but primarily schools and districts should use the modules to help prepare. Modules for training are now online at the DOE website.

## **Appendix D**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, as the principal of Sussex Central High School (SCHS), I led a group that was organized to explore Response to Intervention (RTI) frameworks for our school. The ultimate goal of the committee was to eventually develop a school-wide RTI plan. The RTI committee met regularly to discuss a whole-school approach to RTI and to determine the most appropriate intervention curricular options. Much progress was made, and an initial plan was in place at the close of the 2014 school year.

During the summer of 2014, I transitioned from my role as principal of SCHS to the Director of Compliance and Accountability for the Indian River School District (IRSD). A responsibility of the new position was to provide support to the district middle schools as they worked to improve existing RTI programs and to oversee the development of new school-wide RTI programs at the district high schools. I quickly realized that the task of managing managers would be different than managing a school of teachers, thus I looked to the literature to help guide my approach to providing RTI support to secondary schools within IRSD.

As I began to look into the literature on secondary RTI as a principal, and again, as a central office administrator supporting secondary schools, it was apparent that much of the research within RTI was conducted at the elementary school level. The purpose of this literature review was to gain a better understanding of the school-wide process and supports needed for an effective secondary RTI program. I selected

literature based on the relevance to the question - What does the research say about the implementation of RTI at the secondary level? More specifically, I wanted to explore the 9 common elements of RTI as identifies by Canter, Klotz and Cowan (2008).

What does the research say about the implementation of RTI at the secondary level?

- Administrative support
- Systemic data collection
- Staff support and training
- Parent support and involvement
- Understanding of legal requirements
- Realistic timelines
- Strong teams
- Integration with existing schedules
- Coordination of existing intervention programs

To locate potential studies, I used the University of Delaware's online library database. I searched within Education Full Text using the following specific search criteria: the words *Response to Intervention* within the abstract and the words *Secondary* and *School* as key words. The search produced 109 potential articles. After reviewing the abstract for each article to identify the literature that was most relevant to my work, I was able to narrow my search to 13 relevant articles. I then conducted a second search using the same key words using the University of Delaware Library's Academic One File. This database produced 11 possible articles; some articles were identified in both databases. After reviewing the abstract for each, I was able to identify three additional articles that are relevant to my work. Finally, in order to

further examine available literature specific to RTI state laws, I searched the Academic One File and the Education Full Text database using the key terms *Response to Intervention* and *State Laws*. The search of these two databases produced six possible articles. While analyzing the works cited within the literature uncovered from my original searches, I uncovered several additional articles that were relevant to my research.

### **Administrative Support**

As a former high school principal, I understand the impact the building leader can have on the implementation of school programs, including RTI. The building leader makes decisions regarding fiscal support, professional development, human capital and more. Without the support of the principal, a successful RTI program will be difficult. Sansoti, Noltemeyer, and Goss (2010) surveyed nearly 500 principals; their survey revealed that principals are a major catalyst for change in schools. They also found that if RTI is to be successful, principals must put appropriate process in place. Lau, Sieler, and Muyskens (2006) found that the successful implementation of RTI requires principals to demonstrate their commitment to the program through participation in team meetings, the allocation of resources and the restructuring of staff time to allow for problem-solving meetings.

Principals must also not only lead, but also work to ensure that the staff within the school is working towards the RTI vision. In a qualitative case study of the first year of RTI implementation at a middle school, Dulaney (2013) found that school leaders should build consensus on why and how to implement an RTI program.

King, Lemons, and Hill (2012) further recommend that secondary administrators should:

- Align the school's components of RTI to the school's mission statement.
- Monitor the delivery of their teacher's instruction and assist them with the development of intervention instruction to support the needs of the students.
- Utilize related service staff on the RTI team.
- Provide necessary professional development related to the analysis of student data.
- Become more informed of RTI through collaboration with the knowledgeable leaders within their buildings such as school psychologists.
- Connect with local researchers to form partnerships in the development of secondary RTI programs.

### **Systemic Data Collection**

The primary purpose of RTI data collection is to help with the determination of the students who are in need of interventions and to analyze the success of the interventions that have been implemented.

A clear system for gathering student data will be vital for schools to make informed decisions about interventions and tier placement. Delaware provides clear guidance on when to collect and analyze data. As indicated within section 12 of Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code, students must be screened and progress monitored regularly (Title 14 Delaware Code). Hauerwas, Brown, and Scott (2013) found that Delaware is one of the few states that includes specific timeframes for the review of data in their regulations.

### **Staff Support and Training**

Professional development for staff, especially when transitioning from an existing program, or implementing a first-time program like RTI, will be extremely important. If teachers do not understand how the program is structured and the

benefits of the program, the buy-in may be low, thus impacting overall implementation success.

Teachers must understand the importance and must be trained in how to effectively implement RTI within their school. Kratochwill, Volpiansky, Clements, and Ball (2007) note that professional development should systematically provide support for the understanding of the concepts of RTI and the specific procedures that will be employed. They also note that RTI requires multifaceted systems changes, including significant changes to school practices and beliefs. A literature review and subsequent analysis of RTI professional development by Fuerborn, Sarin, and Tyre (2011) revealed that secondary schools should spend significant time creating a strategic professional development plans that addresses content-specific RTI, anticipates potential barriers and incorporates the principles of effective professional development. In addition, Chard (2013) asserts that a culture of professional development is essential to the success of a multitier RTI model.

Teachers should also understand the various resources that will be used to implement RTI. Two of Dulaney's (2013) four major trends of RTI implementation at the secondary level involved staff support. He notes that that available resource must be identified and the necessary time for collaboration and implementation must be scheduled. He also shared that teachers must be prepared through ongoing professional development to use best practice and differentiate instruction so that the majority of students can progress within the general education setting.

Because the district middle schools have had RTI in place longer than the high schools, they may be better positioned to provide more strategic RTI professional development. During a 2009 study of five schools that have established RTI programs,

Tackett, Roberts, Baker, and Scammacca (2009) found that as RTI becomes more sophisticated, professional development must focus on specific practices. For instance, specific professional development may support progress monitoring, data analysis and refreshers on the overall RTI model.

Staff should also be aware that the secondary schools should not necessarily implement their RTI programs in the same manner as their colleagues at the elementary level. Vaughn and Fletcher (2012) warn against the adoption of an RTI model that mirrors models used at the elementary level. They assert that the elementary model lacks evidence to assume that 80% of students will respond at Tier 1, 15% will respond to Tier 2 and 5% require the intensive interventions of Tier 3.

### **Parent support and involvement**

Much like any new program, parent support for a new or updated RTI program is important. If parents do not fully understand the program they may have significant questions related to why their child is in a particular tier. Dulaney (2013) found that the school community, including parents, must participate in data-driven decision making. Canter et al (2008) believes that parents should be invited to information sessions and included on advisory councils to provide input as the design of the RTI program gets underway.

### **Understanding of legal requirements**

Secondary school RTI within the IRSD will be used to both support all students and as a way to properly identify students with learning disabilities. When considering RTI implantation at the secondary level, it is important to ensure that the programs comply with state and federal laws and regulations.

Provisions within the reauthorization of the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 2004 and within the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have helped to support RTI decisions in schools. Requirements within both Acts support the idea of RTI as a means of providing intervention services to students in need (Glover & DiPerna, 2007).

Although RTI is an option for an approach to determining specific learning disabilities, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not establish the way in which RTI should be implemented. IDEA does require school teams to consider the method of disability identification, which should include data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (Zirkel & Thomas, 2010). These strategies encompass the basic processes of RTI and have been implemented at the elementary level in IRSD for quite some time.

A review of the web sites of all 50 state departments by Hauerwas, Brown, and Scott (2013) examined each state regulations and state's guidance documents on the use of RTI for the identification of specific learning disability (SLD) eligibility. The researchers found that all 50 states had regulations in which RTI was mentioned. As identified within the research, Delaware is one of 17 states that require the analysis of RTI data to identify a student with (SLD). Six states require districts to submit an RTI plan to the state before it can be used as part of the special education process within districts. Delaware Department of Education does not require districts to submit an RTI plan. Title 14 of the Delaware code, requires that each public agency establish and implement procedures to determine whether a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions (RTI) for reading and mathematics (Delaware Code).



Through a systemic synthesis of the scope of RTI in state laws and state guidelines, Zirkel and Thomas (2010) analyzed the various state laws that have helped to guide the development of RTI across the country. They noted that as of September 2009, most states had chosen to permit both RTI and a severe discrepancy model when determining eligibility. They shared the processes that are *required* by states and the processes that are *recommended*; Table 15 outlines the findings in five areas for Delaware and surrounding states. Interestingly, Delaware is one of only five states (Louisiana, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Washington) where each of the five categories explored were explicitly required by law. (Zirkel & Thomas 2010)

Table 15 Core Characteristic of RTI for SLD Identification in area states.

| State | High Quality Research-Based Gen. Ed instruction | Universal Screening for Academic and Behavior Problems | Continuous Progress Monitoring       | Multiple Tiers of Progressively More Intense Instruction/Interventions | Fidelity Measures                    |
|-------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| DE    | Explicitly Required by Law                      | Explicitly Required by Law                             | Explicitly Required by Law           | Explicitly Required by Law   | Explicitly Required by Law           |
| MD    | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines            | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines                   | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines                                   | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines |
| PA    | Explicitly Required by Law                      | Explicitly Required by Guidelines                      | Explicitly Required by Law           | Implicitly Required by Law   | Explicitly Required by Guidelines    |
| VA    | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines            | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines                   | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines | Explicitly Recommended by Guidelines                                   | N/A                                  |

Zirkel and Thomas (2010) also studied the RTI *recommendations* and *requirements* across the nation. Most states, including Delaware, either recommend, or require 6-12 weeks per intervention round for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. However, the frequency and intensity of the intervention are addressed primarily through state recommendation, not requirements. The most predominant intensity and frequency is 30 minutes, 3 to 5 times per week for Tier 2 interventions and 30-60 minutes, 4 to 5 times per week for Tier 3 interventions. Additionally, the authors note that Delaware requires greater than or equal to 2 sessions per week for 90 minutes per week if a student is identified as needing support in reading or math. If a student requires support in reading and math in Delaware, they will be provided greater than or equal to 120 minutes of intervention per week. In Delaware, if a student qualifies for Tier 3 interventions, they are entitled to four sessions per week for reading or math for greater than or equal to 150 minutes per week. If they qualify for reading and math, they are entitled to greater than or equal to 180 minutes per week. Table 16 illustrates national trends and Delaware requirements respectively. Most states recommend, or require, universal screening at the Tier 1 level three times per year. Most states have RTI programs that have formalized rules around the frequency of progress monitoring, but few except Delaware have developed clear criteria regarding student movement between Tiers. The law requires that Delaware provide universal screenings for Tier 1 students followed by weekly progress monitoring screenings for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. (Delaware Code)

Table 16 Comparison of nationwide vs. Delaware RTI requirements

| Requirement | Tier 2             |                          | Tier 3             |                          |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|             | Nationwide Trend   | Delaware                 | Nationwide Trend   | Delaware                 |
| Frequency   | 3-5 times per week | 2 times per week minimum | 4-5 times per week | 4 times per week minimum |
| Duration    | 6-12 week          | 6-12 weeks               | 6-12 weeks         | 6-12 weeks               |
| intensity   | 30 minutes         | 90 minutes               | 30-60 minutes      | 150 minutes              |

### Realistic timelines

Whether modifying an existing program or implementing a first-time RTI program, schools should take their time and strategically plan implementation. Canter et al (2008) share that developing an RTI plan and staff development can take a year.

In an article written for the RTI Action Network <http://www.rtinetwork.org/getstarted/implement/implementyourplan>, Batsche suggest a three-year timeline to fully implement RTI. Year one should focus on consensus building and core instruction associated with tier one. Year two should focus on data analysis and tier two development. Year three should focus on evaluation of RTI progress thus far and tier three interventions.

### Year 1

1. Establish a district leadership team and a school-based leadership team.
2. Achieve consensus.
3. Identify level of implementation (grade, subject, or entire building).
4. Identify professional development needs and technical assistance protocols.
5. Focus on Tier 1 (core instruction).

## **Year 2**

1. Evaluate outcomes of Year 1.
2. Identify common needs of students for Tier 2 instruction/intervention.
3. Create “Data Days” (four times per year) to establish timelines for data analysis and instructional evaluation.
4. Begin to focus on strategies for integrating Tier 2 interventions with core instruction and assessment.
5. Continue professional development in areas that support a Tier 2 focus.
6. Target technical assistance.
7. Identify needs and focus for Year 3.

## **Year 3**

1. Evaluate outcomes of Year 2.
2. Identify needs of students requiring intensive interventions.
3. Establish a protocol (frequency/intensity) for “Data Days” that are necessary to support evaluation of Tier 3 interventions.
4. Enhance strategies to integrate both Tier 3 and Tier 2 interventions with core instruction and assessment.
5. Continue professional development, focusing on assessment and intervention strategies to support Tier 3 needs.
6. Target technical assistance

## **Strong teams**

Schools should carefully consider the members of their RTI team, including related service staff members like school psychologist. King et al. (2012) acknowledge that the expertise that related services professionals have regarding educational interventions for struggling students make them valuable resources for RTI teams. Burns (2008) asserts that secondary level RTI teams typically involve a team of

teachers from various areas across the school and instructional specialists. He further notes that team members may change depending on the student and the concern, but remedial teachers, school psychologists, and content-area teachers should remain the same.

### **Integration with existing schedule**

As schools work towards the adoption of completely new or modified RTI programs, school leaders must consider the impact of a new RTI program on the existing school schedule. A survey of nearly 500 principals and district administrators by Sansosti (2010) revealed that principals perceive scheduling and structural factors as key barriers to RTI implementation in secondary schools.

Secondary school schedules can be complex and can take on many different forms. When considering changing secondary schedules, especially schedules that have been established for many years, it is important to consider all options and the potential ramifications of the change. It is important for principals to remember that they do not need to fully adopt an RTI framework that has worked at the elementary level. In fact, elementary models may not work at all within a secondary setting. King et al. (2012) caution against the assumption that secondary level RTI techniques will be met with the same success as those who have successfully implemented elementary RTI.

Whether the secondary school is currently operating on a traditional multi-period schedule, or a block schedule, options exist when considering how to integrate RTI. King et al. (2012) discussed the framework of the traditional 6 to 8 hour long periods and the 100 minute block schedule, where classes occur on an alternating basis. The researchers share that those schools with a traditional schedule should plan

for a course explicitly dedicated to intervention instruction, or allow content-specific teachers the opportunity to teach interventions within their courses. In contrast, they note that those schools operating on a block schedule should allow for the students to be subdivided during the block to receive instruction from a team of teachers who are assigned to certain groups based on the intervention needs. Currently within IRSD secondary schools, traditional and block schedules exist, thus infusing an RTI program is feasible.

When noting the opportunities RTI affords struggling students in secondary schools, Ehren (2009) points out that specific supports, especially supports for students struggling with literacy, are needed. She suggests that literacy supports will help student learning in all content areas. To address these challenges, she suggests considering a class within a class, a lab, before- or after-school programs, special elective courses, and co-teaching.

Regardless of the specific schedule or framework chosen, district schools should be cognizant of potential scheduling barriers. Ehren (2009) acknowledges that secondary RTI does present challenges especially considering the complexity of schedules. Some of the scheduling challenges noted include:

- Developing an RTI structure that fits into the existing framework of the school.
- Determining the structure of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.
- Outlining how students will transition in and out of the Tiers while earning the needed credits towards a diploma and grade advancement.

### **Coordination of existing intervention programs**

There was some concern that IRSD secondary schools would be unwilling to transition to the RTI model when there were already intervention plans within the existing schedule. While discussing dispelled myths associated with RTI at secondary schools, Ehren (2009) notes that although learning gaps may be larger with older students, interventions are not without merit. Secondary students can benefit from RTI.

Allsopp and Hoppey (2011) share that the structure of secondary schools and the complexity associated with curricula can complicate the integration of RTI within specific content areas. Middle and high schools have career and technical education and foreign language requirements that mandate that all students complete certain courses. Students cannot simply forgo these classes to attend intervention or enrichment classes. With that said, it is important for the secondary schools to determine ways to integrate the new RTI program within existing building academic programs.

Although integration the integration of RTI into existing programs may have some difficulties, integration is possible with creative scheduling. Burns (2008) shared that simultaneously scheduling remedial intervention courses with content area courses is a common high school scheduling technique. Part of the time is devoted to the content curriculum and part of the time is devoted to interventions implemented using the content curriculum. Through flexible grouping, students can move in and out of the intervention time as needed. This technique can also incorporate a second teacher or specialist, who could focus on the students who require interventions.

## **Summary**

The research reviewed offers a wealth of information on how to best implement RTI at the secondary level. The nine common elements of RTI, as identified by Canter et al. (2008), offer a helpful framework that schools can use to develop or enhance their RTI programs. Their framework will be shared with IRSD middle and high school RTI planning teams as they move forward with their implementations of RTI.



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## **Appendix E**

### **BOARD PRESENTATION**

Stakeholder support for a systematic RTI plan within district secondary schools will be one of the keys to program success. Although district employees define day-to-day fiscal expenditures and personnel management, the Indian River School District (IRSD) board determines fiscal and personnel validation. Without board support, absolute implementation of the program may not occur. With this in mind, it is vital that the IRSD board receive a complete and straightforward account of the benefits and implications of the program.

The development of succinct board presentation will help to illustrate the benefits of the systemic RTI program within IRSD secondary schools. The rationale within the presentation must give ample information to provide an accurate account of the benefits of the program, while also not overwhelming the group with information not essential to program legitimacy determination.

The presentation will focus on the importance of providing interventions for students who are at risk of not meeting their full potential. The presentation will also impart information associated with the Delaware state code, which supports program implementation.

#### **Introductory Slides**

The presentation will begin with a short video clip that is intended to develop a mindset for the board members that teachers and schools work hard to meet the needs

of students. The opening slides will provide a definition of RTI and explain the need for RTI in IRSD middle and high schools. I have also elected to include information related to the benefits of RTI. I want the board to understand that RTI programs within the district secondary schools have the potential to have a very positive impact on student learning. Early within the presentation, I will also share the requirements of the Delaware Code. By sharing of this information I hope to impart not only the need, but also the obligation to initiate RTI at the secondary level.

### **Program Detail Slides**

The presentation next includes information specific to the RTI tier system. In addition to a detailed explanation of each tier, a graphic of Delaware's three-tiered system with typical student percentage allocations. To help emphasize this information, I included a video that discusses, in detail, the components of each of the tiers. Following the video, screening tools and intervention curricula are identified.

### **School Programing**

To reinforce that the implementation of RTI at the secondary schools will not require wholesale changes, I have include middle school and high school information already in place to support the diverse needs of the students. While promoting the initiation of a systemic RTI program, I wanted to be careful not to give the impression that the secondary schools are currently neglecting the needs of "at risk" students. Although schools have developed programs to assist the neediest students, as a district, it will be important for the schools to adopt a systemic RTI framework.

**Challenges**

In order to be as transparent as possible, I felt it important to include the challenges that the schools will face when implementing RTI. The greatest challenges will likely occur when developing schedules, staffing intervention classrooms and adopting intervention curricula. The potential struggle points will be acknowledged in hopes that the members of the board recognize that the district is aware of the work to be done.

**Promising Practices**

Information will be shared regarding the lessons learned within the IRSD secondary schools and secondary schools within the area. More specifically, I will discuss potential scheduling options, curriculum options and overall considerations. I think the board will be interested in knowing that we have collaborated with neighboring schools to identify potential RTI schedules and curricula. The overall lessons learned provides an illustration of broad considerations that should be taken into account when planning for a new RTI program.

**Next Steps**

I will conclude the presentation with an outline of what needs to occur in order to begin to implement the RTI program within the schools. This information will be succinct so as not to overwhelm the members of the board.

# Response to Intervention (RTI) within Secondary Schools

## Indian River School District

*"Whatever it takes to ensure success for all students."*

We have the power to  
motivate our students to  
accomplish what they never  
thought possible!


- ▶ [ps://https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yPkbhFQIfw&feature=player\\_detailpage](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yPkbhFQIfw&feature=player_detailpage)



## What is RTI?


“RTI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions. RTI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by child outcome data.”

(NASDSE, 2005)






## Why RTI at our secondary school?

- Assistance is needed for the most “at risk” students.
  - More accurate identification of students with special needs.
  - Consistent identification of instructional needs of our students.
  - Specific interventions can improve student performance in the classroom, and on standardized assessments including the SAT.
  - Student feeling of support from the school.
- 

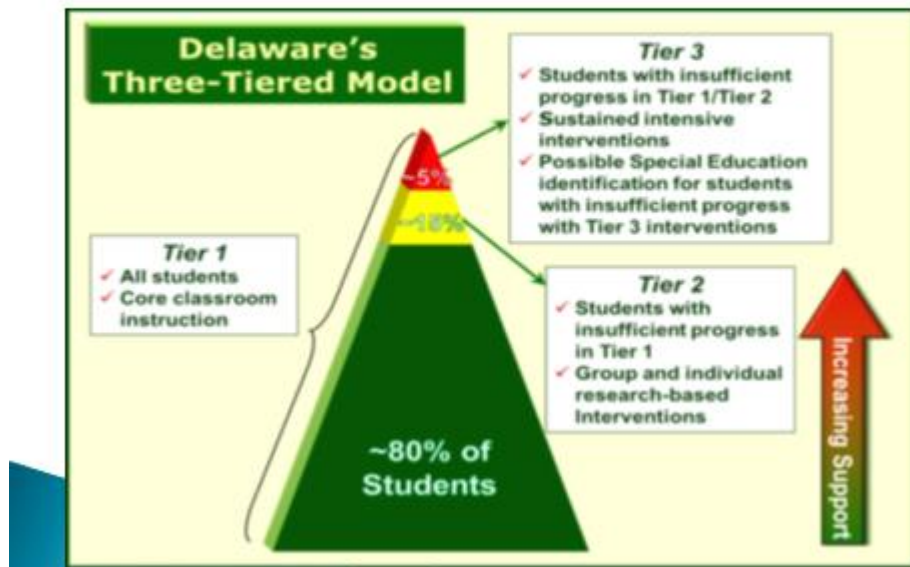
## DOE Requirements

- All students “**at risk**” at the secondary level will be screened at least three times per year
  - Screening for all students shall be regularly spaced throughout the school year
  - Screening instruments will be norm referenced or curriculum based
  - Progress monitoring instruments must be curriculum based
- 

## 3-Tiered Approach

- Tier 1
    - Core curriculum – CCSS
    - Involves all students
  - Tier 2
    - Students who have not been successful in Tier I
    - Group and Individual intervention provided by our staff. *minimum 90 minutes per week*
  - Tier 3
    - Students who have not been successful in Tier II
    - Sustained intensive interventions. *minimum 150 minutes per week.*
    - Potential Special Education services for students who do not meet success in Tier III
- \*Tier II and III require frequent monitoring to help to gauge progress.**

## Delaware's 3-Tiered Model



This video may give you a better idea of RTI...

- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkK1bT8Is0M>



## Screening


Three types of screeners are currently in place...

- ▶ Teacher developed *common* summative assessments
- ▶ District adopted universal reading and math screeners
- ▶ Scholastic Reading and Math inventories



## Interventions

- ▶ Tier 1 – Core Curriculum Common Core State Standards
- ▶ Tier 2 and 3–
  - Khan Academy
  - PALS
  - Read 180
  - Math 180
  - Specialized reading and math classes




## Programs already in place at SCHS that will support RTI...

- ▶ 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade “academies”
- ▶ Instructional Support Team
- ▶ Positive Behavior Support
- ▶ Flexible grouping
- ▶ School wide “meet the challenge” grouping
- ▶ Title 1 funding
  - Staffing
  - Technology
  - Innovative resources

## Programs already in place at IRHS that will support RTI...

- ▶ Instructional Support Team
- ▶ Push-in and pull-out services
- ▶ Computer labs used for intervention services
- ▶ ELA and Math Classes flexibly grouped by ability



## Programs already in place at our Middle Schools that will support RTI...

- ▶ School-wide meet the challenge initiatives
- ▶ Screening of all students.
- ▶ Flexible grouping based on the needs of the students.

## Challenges with implementation

### Scheduling

- RTI may require a revised schedule. Students and staff will need to adjust to a new schedule.

### Staffing

- RTI may necessitate a coordinator and the restructuring of teaching staff.

### Curriculum

- Secondary schools will need to consider an intervention curriculum for students who are in Tier 2 and 3 of RTI.

Much can be learned  
from those around  
us...

## Scheduling Lessons Learned

- ▶ “Skinny” blocks allow for whole-school to have intervention.
- ▶ Double blocked math allows for strategic support.
- ▶ Flexible grouping maximize supports and staff.
- ▶ Whole-school intervention time



## Curriculum Lesson Learned

- ▶ New curriculums may need curricular support.
- ▶ Achieve 3000 is highly recommended as an ELA intervention program.
- ▶ Khan Academy is recommended as a Math intervention program.
- ▶ Highly scripted curriculums are recommended.



## Overall Lessons Learned

- ▶ Adequate planning is a key to program success.
- ▶ Much consideration should be given to the timeframe between screenings.
- ▶ An RTI chairperson is essential to program success.
- ▶ The DOE RTI website is a comprehensive resource for schools.



## Next Steps

- ▶ Develop a strategic professional development plan.
- ▶ Provide training on the new schedule.
- ▶ Provide training for the new curriculum/strategies.
- ▶ Develop a system for program evaluation.





IRSD can make a  
difference in the  
educational experience  
for ALL student!



## **Appendix F**

### **ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF RTI IN IRSD SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

An Assessment of the current status of interventions offered within IRSD secondary schools was important to the establishment of baseline information related to intervention programming. A standardized rubric was used to measure school progress.

2014-2015 was the first year in which all secondary schools within the Indian River School District implemented school-wide systematic Response to Intervention (RTI) plans. After speaking with the leaders of the schools, it was clear that a great deal of time and energy went in to developing RTI programs, unfortunately there were few mechanisms planned for assessing program effectiveness. With this in mind, I elected to use the American Institute for Research's (AIR's) RTI Fidelity Rubric to help evaluate the effectiveness of the respective RTI programs within the Indian River School District's secondary schools (Center on Response to Intervention, 2014).

The RTI Fidelity Rubric covers five main categories of RTI: *Assessment*, *Data-Based Decision Making*, *Multilevel Instruction*, *Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms*, and *Fidelity and Evaluation*. Within each category there are several subcategories that cover more specific elements of RTI. Attachment 1 presents the rubric categories and respective subcategories. The rubric is intended to assess a school's overall fidelity to an RTI program.

I used the rubric to gather and assess the most up-to-date RTI implementation information from the schools. Although AIR developed a 5-point rubric, I adjusted the rubric to a 3-point rubric for ease in understanding. A score of one indicated that the school could not demonstrate any progress in the specific area. A score of two indicated partial progress and a score of three indicated complete and effective implementation.

I eliminated three sections from the rubric (i.e., *Differentiated Instruction*, *Prevention Focus* and *Cultural Linguistic Responsiveness*) because they each called for interviewing additional staff members, and/or speculating on the individual practices and/or procedures of others within the school. I wanted to avoid opinions as much as possible in order to provide feedback based on facts. To illustrate overall progress of each school, I interviewed the individual(s) most knowledgeable of the respective schools' RTI program, as determined by the principal. To ensure that I received the desired information, I elected to personally interview the designated individuals from each school, instead of having the selected staff member complete the rubric individually. More specifically, I interviewed the principal at Millsboro Middle School (MMS), the assistant principal at Sussex Central High School (SCHS), the RTI coordinators at Georgetown Middle School (GMS) and Selbyville Middle Schools (SMS), and a team of administrators and RTI staff at Indian River High School. Prior to each meeting, I shared the RTI Fidelity Rubric to increase transparency and to help the RTI staff to prepare. All those interviewed were candid with their responses and reflective about their school's progress. In addition, the staff members provided me with documents used to facilitate RTI programs within their schools and invited me to visit RTI classrooms within their schools. The resources

provided are shared in Attachments 2-5. Unfortunately, I learned through the interviews that these resources are rarely shared with other district schools.

In order to discern trends, and to assist with the development of commendations and recommendations, I added the points earned for each of the categories associated with each school's rubric. Attachment 6 outlines the point breakdown for each of the categories of the rubric. Table 17 presents the total score earned by each school for each of the five categories of the fidelity rubric (maximum 84). The total scores ranged from a low of 64 (SCHS) to a high of 75 (SMS). The mean for the five secondary schools is 71. The district middle schools generally scored higher than the high schools. Higher scores are likely due to the fact that IRSD middle schools have implemented the RTI program for a number of years prior to RTI implementation at the IRSD high schools. The rubric was initially intended for K-8 schools and AIR has not established norms for high-school progress on the rubric. As shown in Table 17, all schools, were at or near the district mean except SCHS's Infrastructure Support score which was three points below the district average in that category.

Table 17 RTI Fidelity Implementation Rubric subsection scores

|      | Assessment<br>(max=15) | Data-Based<br>Decision<br>Making<br>(max=9) | Multilevel<br>Instruction<br>(max=33) | Infrastructure<br>Support<br>(max=21) | Fidelity &<br>Evaluations<br>(max=6) | Total<br>(max=84) |
|------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| SCHS | 12                     | 6   | 27                                    | 15                                    | 4                                    | 64                |
| IRHS | 15                     | 7   | 30                                    | 18                                    | 3                                    | 73                |
| SMS  | 13                     | 8   | 30                                    | 20                                    | 4                                    | 75                |
| MMS  | 14                     | 7   | 30                                    | 19                                    | 4                                    | 74                |
| GMS  | 12                     | 6   | 29                                    | 19                                    | 4                                    | 70                |

|      |       |     |       |       |     |    |
|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-----|----|
| Mean | 13/15 | 7/9 | 29/33 | 18/21 | 4/6 | 71 |
|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-----|----|

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The information gathered from the RTI Fidelity Rubric was organized into school-specific tables and was shared during the December 2015 Secondary Principals' meeting. Attachments 7-11 are the completed rubrics for each of the schools. I provided each principal with a summary document that included rubric findings, individual school scores, recommendations and commendations. I offered recommendations for improvement in red throughout the rubric to emphasize scores of one or two on the rubric. Although I did not go into school-specific detail during the secondary principals' meeting, each school contacted me after the meeting for details related to rubric findings. Attachment 12 is the presentation shared with principals. During the meeting, the IRSD Director of Instruction and the Supervisor of Secondary Instruction asked for clarity around rubric findings associated with schedules and curricula.

As observed during the principals' meeting in which the information was shared, the schools were pleased with their overall scores and were eager to begin tackling the findings that resulted in recommendations. I attribute the higher district scores to the work and training that occurred within the secondary schools over the last three years. The fact that the schools have assigned a staff member to oversee their RTI programs has greatly impacted the progress of their programs, as indicated by the principals in follow-up conversations. Although the scores are relatively high, concerns do remain. Of greatest concern were areas of the rubric that indicated that schools failed to earn points in key areas of their program that are mandated by code. As noted, the structure of the point system is on a 1-3 Likert scale. Thus, a school may fail to earn two points in a given category, but those two points may have been

associated with a significant element of the school's framework. Thus, it is important for schools to analyze their school-specific findings to best understand their RTI progress.

### **Sussex Central High School Findings**

As indicated in Table 17, it appears that SCHS has more work to do than other district secondary schools. SCHS earned the least points out of all of the secondary schools on the RTI Fidelity Rubric with a total score of 65. More specifically, SCHS was outscored by IRHS in all categories except *Fidelity and Evaluation* – SCHS did score a maximum six points in this category which lead all district secondary schools.

SCHS is the only district secondary school that has assigned an administrator as the individual in charge of RTI in their building. Their assistant principal was knowledgeable of all aspects of the RTI program within the school. SCHS has also developed an innovative schedule that double blocks math classes and provides an Academic Reading and Writing class to their most at risk learners. This schedule is unlike other district secondary schools.

The two sections of the rubric where SCHS scored the lowest were *Infrastructure and Support* and *Multilevel Instruction*. SCHS failed to earn six points in these sections respectively. According to findings gathered during the interview process and through follow-up questioning, there is no school-wide process for educating all staff on the importance of RTI, nor is there a process for notifying staff of the school's specific RTI framework at SCHS-This is a primary component of the *Infrastructure and Support* portion of the rubric, and this was not identified as a concern for other district secondary schools. SCHS also failed to earn the maximum score of three points in each of the seven subsections of this category of the rubric

except one (*Resources*). The SCHS assistant principal who was interviewed noted that their school's RTI framework was shared primarily with English, Math and Special Education teachers who are responsible for providing the intervention instruction, not the entire staff. Within this same section of the rubric, findings indicate that there is limited professional development for staff who teach intervention classes at SCHS. As outlined in the rubric, maximum points are earned when professional development is institutionalized and structured so that all teachers continuously examine, reflect upon, and improve practices. In addition, class rosters associated with Tier 3 intervention classes are not always smaller when compared to Tier 2. This is not the case within the other district secondary schools. Title 14 of the Delaware Code indicates that Tier 3 interventions shall be delivered in groups smaller than those for intervention delivered in Tier 2 (Delaware Code).

SCHS has yet to develop a clear set of procedures for student transition between tiers when receiving math interventions. Attachment 4 outlines the SCHS "RTI Diagnostic Roadmap" for reading which was shared during the interview process. This degree of guidance has not been replicated for the math program. According to the *RTI Team* subsection of the rubric, in order to score maximum points, among other things, structures and clear processes should be in place to guide decision making. Each of the areas of concern referenced above contributed to a diminished score on the rubric for SCHS. A complete listing of SCHS scoring can be found within attachment 10.

## **Indian River High School Findings**

As identified within the rubric, IRHS earned a mean score of 73 on the RTI Fidelity Rubric, which was two points above the district average. IRHS earned a maximum and district-high 15 points in the *Assessment* portion of the rubric.

Significant points were earned because IRHS has:

- Adopted a formal process for progress monitoring.
- Selected progress monitoring tools include benchmarks and provide reliable and valid information to the staff.
- Developed a standardized set of procedures to analyze students' progress data.
- Considered multiple progress monitoring data sources.
- Screened all incoming freshmen for “at risk” performance.

Although IRHS's scores were consistent with the district middle schools, the rubric identifies areas where there is room for growth. The lack of procedures associated with evaluating the effectiveness of the program and fidelity to the intervention curricula are the areas of greatest concern for IRHS. More specifically, IRHS lacks a plan for evaluating the short- and long-term goals of their RTI program. Although this concern may be evident, in part, at other schools, failure to earn 3 points in this area has resulted in fewer earned points when compared to the other schools. IRHS was the only secondary school to earn maximum points in the Assessment portion of the rubric. IRHS screens all 9<sup>th</sup> graders, math and reading progress monitoring data points are reviewed regularly, and progress monitoring occurs consistently and in accordance with the Delaware code. IRHS has also developed their schedule to include enrichment opportunities for students who are not in need of interventions. This schedule has resulted in additional points earned in the *Multilevel*



*Instruction* portion of the rubric. IRHS was above the secondary school mean with 73 total points. IRHS earned a maximum, and district high, 15 points for *Assessment*. A complete listing of IRHS scoring can be found within attachment 8.

When compared to the district middle schools, IRHS's mean score was greater than GMS and within one to two points of SMS and MMS respectively. The implementation of the "PRIDE" period at IRHS is similar to the strategy employed at the district middle schools in that a specific school-wide period is scheduled for all students in which RTI needs are addressed.

### **Millsboro Middle School Findings**

MMS had the second highest score (74) of each of the secondary schools, as identified within the RTI Fidelity Rubric. MMS was at or above the district average in each of the individual categories of the rubric. Their experience with RTI may be a contributing factor to their cumulative rubric score of 74. MMS has had RTI in place for four years. Contributing to the points earned on the rubric is the fact that MMS has developed appropriate processes for screening students and their progress monitoring procedures meet the criteria outlined within Delaware code. MMS also scored 14/15 points within the *Assessment* portion of the rubric, which was one point higher than SMS and GMS. MMS has earned the additional point in this category because they have developed a standardized approach for progress monitoring in the form of Scholastic Reading and Math Inventories. MMS failed to earn maximum points in this portion of the rubric, because the school has yet to develop a standardized process for analyzing student progress monitoring data.

In addition, MMS failed to earn points in the *Infrastructure and Support* portion of the rubric because they have not provided school-specific RTI professional

development to all school staff. MMS, like all district secondary schools except SMS, failed to earn points because the school has not developed a letter that provides parents with information related to student RTI progress. A complete listing of MMS scoring can be found within attachment 9.

### **Georgetown Middle School Findings**

Georgetown Middle School earned a mean score of 71 on the on the RTI Fidelity Rubric, which is aligned with the district average. GMS has had RTI in place for at least two years. Like other district secondary schools, GMS scored well in the *Multilevel Instruction* portion of the rubric (30). GMS also scored additional points because they have involved appropriate staff in the RTI decision making process and have provided training to all staff on the school's RTI process.

GMS earned 12 out of a possible 15 points for the Assessment portion of the rubric. Three points were not earned because the school failed to include additional data from previous school years when considering those students who may be in need of interventions. In addition, the school has not adopted a standardized progress monitoring tool like the Scholastic Reading and Math Inventory. MMS has adopted this tool. GMS earned 6 out of a possible 9 points on the rubric for *Data Based Decisions Making*. GMS failed to earn maximum points because they have not developed a standardized process for reviewing student data. They also have not consistently involved an administrator in the data review and decision making process. A complete listing of GMS scoring can be found in attachment 7.

## **Selbyville Middle School Findings**

Selbyville Middle School scored a district high 75 points, as measured by the RTI Fidelity Rubric. SMS has had a formalized RTI program for the last two years, but has had a program to address the needs of their “at risk” students for some time. SMS scored at, or above, the district average in each of the five rubric categories. A district high score was earned in the *Data-Based Decisions* and *Infrastructure Support* section of the rubric.

Contributing to the increased scores at SMS is the creation of documents that support the RTI program in the school. Attachment 5 is a document that provides an overview of the SMS RTI plan. This document is shared with all staff. Additionally, SMS has created a comprehensive *Frequently Asked Questions* document and an *RTI plan* document. This document provides clarity to staff when considering RTI decisions. SMS has also created a repository of RTI information associated with the school. A complete listing of SMS scoring can be found in attachment 11. SMS is the only secondary school that provides a parent letter to parents that provides RTI progress updates. This resulted in increased points in the *Infrastructure and Support* portion of the rubric. SMS has assigned a staff member to, among other responsibilities; oversee the school’s RTI program. This staff member analyzes RTI data, assists with curriculum development and collaborates with teachers to determine all student RTI classroom and tier assignments.

## **Conclusions**

One of the most encouraging findings was that all secondary schools have either retained an existing RTI coordinator, added a new RTI coordinator position to their staff, or modified existing job responsibilities to allow for an existing staff

member to oversee RTI. This supports schools' understanding of the importance of a solid RTI program. As shared during the survey process, these individuals are responsible for the coordination of RTI activities and the management of RTI data. All principals noted that this member of their staff is essential to the successful implementation of RTI within their buildings.

Additionally, the interviews revealed that each school has analyzed their master schedule and made adjustments to accommodate the requirements of RTI. Entirely new schedules, or major adjustments to existing schedules, were common among all IRSD secondary schools. Schedules include additional periods, double blocked periods, whole-school designated RTI times and the creation of courses designed to support at risk students. In addition, all schools except SCHS are now offering enrichment opportunities as part of their RTI program. The courage to alter a schedule, which in some cases had been in place for many years, is a testament to the administrators' commitment to developing and/or improving the RTI programs within their schools.

All schools have also established a screening process that meets the criteria outlined within Delaware Code. The code says that instructional screenings for reading and mathematics at the secondary level shall be conducted for students at risk of academic failure at least three times each regular school year at routine and fairly spaced intervals. The first screening shall be conducted within two weeks of the beginning of the regular school year (Delaware Code). All schools except SCHS screen all students within the first two weeks of the school year. SCHS screens their "at risk" students within the first two weeks of the school year.

### **Implications for Next Steps**

One troubling finding was that there is very little or no evaluation of the short- and long- term goals of the schools' respective RTI programs. As Studer (2003) noted (as cited in Fisher and Frey 2010, p. 127), "the organization needs a system for recognizing what's successful and what's not working well." Some schools conducted "learning walks" during RTI periods, but there was no formal method to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program. In fact, based on the feedback from those interviewed, the process of participating in the completion of the RTI Fidelity Rubric, may have been the first systematic review of the various aspects of the RTI programs within each building. It is recommended that schools develop a process to assess the short and long term goals of the RTI programs.

Schools are not always monitoring their RTI schedules and student placements. As noted in the *Instructional Characteristics* section of the RTI Fidelity Rubric, the intervention group size and dosage opportunities should be optimal for the age and needs of the students. These numbers are not closely monitored by the schools at this time. Special considerations should be made for Tier 3 intervention classes, as Delaware law requires the class size to be smaller when compared to Tier2 classrooms. Optimal class size and dosage opportunities are unachievable without a master schedule that has been developed with these goals in mind. As noted in the *Schedules* section of the rubric, school-wide schedules should be aligned to support the multiple level of intervention. It is recommended that schools regularly evaluate the effectiveness of established schedules for RTI. An annual evaluation of the program using the RTI Fidelity Rubric will provide adequate feedback.

Although each school has begun to develop school-level systems for maintaining procedures, forms, letters and other works involving their specific RTI

program, a district-wide repository has not been established. Interviews with school personnel confirmed that documents that are sent home to inform parents of the RTI program and/or a student's transition between tiers differ between schools. Uniformity with these documents will ensure that the most accurate information is being shared consistently among secondary schools. Thus, the development of a platform to gather all electronic documents associated with school RTI programs is recommended. Specifically, schools should share their documents associated with processes and procedures, parent letters and curriculum. An established electronic site where this information can be accumulated and referenced by all schools will help to provide consistency and reduce redundancy. Use of the district's Schoology site is highly recommended.

Based on the interviews it was determined that some schools have educated their staff on the intricacies of their respective programs, while others have only trained those directly involved with the program. It is recommended that schools provide training for all staff so the entire school is aware of the developed RTI program.

RTI processes, especially processes associated with student transition between tiers have not been standardized in each school. All schools with the exception of IRHS failed to earn maximum points for the *Progress Monitoring Process* portion of the rubric. The interviews revealed that RTI processes varied widely among schools and there was limited documentation of school-wide procedures in some schools. It is recommended that the secondary schools formalize school-level RTI procedures, especially processes associated with student transition between tiers.

Analysis of the rubric scores also revealed that the professional development associated with the various RTI programs is, for the most part, left up to the discretion of the schools. Moreover, PD varies greatly based on the Tier 2 and Tier 3 curricula adopted within each school. No strategic RTI PD plan has been developed to support the adopted intervention curricula. Table 18 outlines the various curricula within each of the secondary schools. Ongoing professional development for the adopted RTI curricula is recommended in order enable teachers to maximize abilities when providing interventions to students.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 curricula vary from school to school, thus data analysis and professional development is difficult. Table 18 illustrates the various intervention curricula offered in IRSD Secondary schools. The *Multilevel Instruction* portion of the rubric, specifically the sub category of *Evidence-Based Interventions*, revealed that no school is consistently evaluating the effectiveness of their intervention curricula. All schools failed to earn maximum points for this reason. It is recommended that all secondary schools, with the support of the IRSD Department of Instruction, implement common intervention curricula and develop a mechanism for the ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of the intervention curricula.

Table 18 Tier 2 and 3 Secondary Intervention Curricula

|             | <b>Tier 2</b>  |   | <b>Tier 3</b>                  |                          |
|-------------|--|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
|             | <b>Reading</b>   | <b>Math</b>   | <b>Reading</b>                 | <b>Math</b>              |
| <b>MMS</b>  | Perfection Learning                                    | Khan Academy<br>Perfection Learning                 | Read 180<br>Sadlier Systems 44 | Math 180<br>Khan Academy |
| <b>GMS</b>  | SpringBoard<br>Sadlier                                 | SpringBorad<br>Perfection Learning                  | Read 180<br>Systems 44         | Math 180<br>Khan Academy |
| <b>SMS</b>  | Common Coach<br>PALS<br>Sadlier<br>Perfection Learning | Khan Academy<br>Quantile.com<br>Perfection Learning | Cognitive Tutor<br>Read 180    | Math 180                 |
| <b>SCHS</b> | Sadlier  | Khan Academy  | Words your Way                 | Khan Academy             |
| <b>IRHS</b> | Sadlier  | Khan Academy  | Read 180                       | Khan Academy             |

In addition to the recommendations provided, it is recommended that schools review and address the individualized feedback provided in the school-specific RTI Fidelity Rubric feedback forms (see attachments 7-11). The feedback is specific to each school and is designed to help schools increase the effectiveness of their existing RTI programs. Special attention should be given to the schools' development of a plan for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program, as no school earned a three on either of the two subsections of the *Fidelity and Evaluation* portion of the rubric.



## **References**

- Center on Response to Intervention at American Institute for Research. (November 2014). RTI fidelity implementation rubric. Retrieved from [http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/RTI\\_Fidelity\\_Rubric.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/RTI_Fidelity_Rubric.pdf)
- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2010). Enhancing RTI how to ensure success with effective classroom instruction and intervention. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Delaware Administrative Code. Title 14 Education. Section 12.0 Response to Intervention Procedures. Retrieved from: <http://delcode.delaware.gov/>

## Attachment 1

The survey was designed to measure each school-level fidelity of RTI implementation across five areas including assessments, data-based decision making, multilevel instruction, infrastructure and support mechanisms, and fidelity and evaluations. Each of these areas is a primary component of the RTI framework. Within each component, there are subcategories which detail the various levels of RTI compliance.

### 1. Assessments

#### a. Screening

- Screening tools-Is the screening tool reliable?
- Universal Screening-Is there screening of all students with adequate procedures for screening more than once per year?
- Data Points to Verify Risk- Are screeners are used in concert with at least two other data sources?

#### b. Progress Monitoring

- Progress Monitoring Tools- Do tools have alternate forms, specify minimum levels of acceptable growth, provide benchmarks? Are the tools reliable and valid?
- Progress Monitoring Process- What is the frequency of progress monitoring? Are procedures in place to ensure accurate implementation?

### 2. Data-Based Decision Making

- Decision Making Process- Is the process for decision making data-driven and operationalized? Does the process involve a broad base of stakeholders?
- Data Systems- Does the system allow users to access individual student data? Is data entered in a timely manner?

Can users represent data graphically? Is there a process for evaluating goals?

- Responsiveness to Interventions- Are decisions about progress based on reliable and valid progress monitoring data and are decision-making criteria implemented accurately?

### 3. Multilevel Instruction

#### Tier 1 Instruction

- Research-Based Curriculum Materials- Are curriculum materials research based?
- Articulation of Teaching and Learning-
- Standards-Based
- Exceeding Benchmark

#### Tier 2 Interventions

- Evidence-Based Intervention
- Complements Core Instruction
- Instructional Characteristics
- Addition to Primary

#### Tier 3 Interventions

- Data-Based Intervention Adaptations
- Instructional Characteristics
- Relationship to Primary

### 4. Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms

- Leadership Personnel
- School Based PD

- Schedules
- Resources
- Communication with Parents
- Communication with and Involvement of all Staff
- RTI Teams

5. Fidelity and Evaluation

- Fidelity
- Evaluation

### **What is RTI?**

"RTI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions. RTI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by child outcome data." (NASDSE, 2006)

### **RTI Resources:**

**RTI Desk Reference:** *A great reference!!!* - [Link](#)

**State of Delaware RTI Implementation Guide:** A detailed description - [Link](#)

Tier I Intervention: Tier 1 is what “ALL” students get in the form of instruction (academic and behavior/social-emotional) and student supports. Tier 1 focuses on the implementation of the district’s Core Curriculum and is aligned with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). Tier 1 services (time and focus) are based on the needs of the students in a particular school. Some schools require more time than other schools in particular core curriculum areas based on student demographics (readiness, language, economic factors) and student performance levels to ensure that all students reach and/or exceed state proficiency levels.

Tier II Intervention: Children who score at or below the 25th percentile on a norm referenced test or the designated cut point on a curriculum based measure for any instructional screening, shall be provided Tier 2 interventions. A school

based team (such as a literacy team, a leadership team or a grade-level team) shall review the program and progress of any child who does not score at benchmark on any instructional screening, but who does score above the 25th percentile on a norm referenced test or the designated cut point on a curriculum based measure, to assure that the child is receiving differentiated, needs-based instruction. In addition, the team's review shall include the fidelity of program implementation, pacing and appropriateness of instructional groupings. The child's progress toward end of year benchmarks shall be monitored at least once every 2 weeks until progress monitoring consistently demonstrates that the child is on a trajectory to meet end of year benchmarks. Tier 2 intervention shall be in addition to regularly scheduled core instruction in the general education curriculum, and shall be delivered in small group, at a minimum of ninety (90) minutes per week in session periods appropriate to age and development, but not less than two (2) sessions per week. In the case of a student identified in need of intervention in both reading and math, the intervention shall be designed by the instructional support team proportionate to student need, but not less than one hundred twenty (120) minutes per week. If, after 6 school weeks of Tier 2 intervention, a child has made no progress toward benchmarks, or has made progress, but is not on a trajectory to meet end-of-year benchmarks, an instructional support team formulated in accordance with 14 **DE Admin. Code** 923.11.9, shall meet to review the child's program and progress, to assure that the child is receiving differentiated, needs-based instruction. In addition, the instructional support team's review shall include fidelity of program implementation, pacing, and

appropriateness of instructional groupings. Based on its review, the instructional support team shall determine whether: additional assessments are required; additional changes to instructional or behavioral methods are required; or the child requires Tier 3 intervention. If, after an additional 6 school weeks of Tier 2 intervention (or up to a total of 12 school weeks of intervention) a child has made no progress toward benchmarks, or has made progress, but is not on a trajectory to meet end-of-year benchmarks, the child shall begin receiving Tier 3 intervention as outlined by the instructional support team.

Tier III: Intervention: Tier 3 interventions shall be designed to be delivered primarily in the general education setting, by a general education teacher and additional staff, but is likely to be delivered in other or additional settings, or by other trained staff as appropriate to the specific intervention. It shall be implemented with fidelity to its scientific research base and matched to the student's needs. Tier 3 intervention shall be in addition to regularly scheduled core instruction in the general education curriculum, and shall be delivered in groups smaller than those for intervention delivered in Tier 2, at a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) minutes per week in session periods appropriate to age and development, but not less than four (4) sessions per week. In the case of a student identified in need of intervention in both reading and math, the intervention shall be designed by the instructional support team proportionate to student need, but not less than one hundred eighty (180) minutes per week. If, after 6 school weeks of Tier 3 interventions (or up to a total of 18 school

weeks of intervention), a child has made progress toward benchmarks, but is not on a trajectory to meet end-of-year benchmarks, the instructional support team shall meet to review the child's program and progress, to assure that the child is receiving differentiated needs-based instruction. In addition, the instructional support team's review shall include fidelity of program implementation, pacing, and appropriateness of instructional groupings. Based on its review, the instructional support team shall determine whether: additional assessments are required; additional changes to instructional or behavioral methods are required; or the child should be referred for an initial evaluation for special education services (THE STUDENT SHOULD BE IN THE IST PROCESS AT THIS POINT!). If, after an additional 6 school weeks of Tier 3 interventions (or up to a total of 24 school weeks of interventions), a child has not made sufficient progress toward end-of-year benchmarks, the instructional support team shall refer the child for an initial evaluation for special education services.

**The GMS RTI Process:**

- All students will receive a universal screener (SRI/SMI)
- The Team Teachers, RTI/IST Coordinator, and Assistant Principal will come together as an RTI team and review the all students' performance on the screener..
- All students whose performance is in the 25%tile or lower will be discussed. The team will look at past performance, current grades, district/state assessments, etc. and make a Tier determination based upon



all data at hand (students who performed higher than the 25<sup>th</sup> %tile but have supporting data that supports a lack of academic progress may also be discussed and placed in Tier II).

- All students who are identified as either Tier II or Tier II will receive an RTI Intervention plan.
  - All intervention plans\* will state:
    - A start and end date for the intervention
    - The specific weaknesses that will be addressed
    - How the students' progress will be monitored
    - Who will instruct the student
    - The program and/or materials that the instructor will be using
    - The small group size
    - The amount of time (in minutes per week) the students will receive instruction
      - All intervention plans will be recorded in I-Tracker
- Identified students will receive instruction for a minimum of 6 weeks (approximately 30 days).
  - Students' Intervention attendance will be recorded in I-Tracker on a daily basis.
- Students will be progress monitored on a weekly (Tier 3) or bi-weekly (Tier 2) basis.
  - All progress monitoring will be recorded in I-Tracker

- After 6 weeks of intervention, the RTI team, consisting of the Team Teachers, RTI/IST Coordinator, and Assistant Principal, will meet to discuss all students with Intervention plans as well as any Tier 1 students who are experiencing a lack of academic progress in the classroom. The RTI Team will determine Tier movement (up or down) as well as instructional changes (this will be documented in I-Tracker). New plans will then be implemented and the process will start from the beginning.

- **2015-2016 RTI Cycle Dates:**

**Testing**                      **9/8/15 – 9/25/15 (14 days)**

Cycle 1 Planning            9/28/15 – 9/30/2015 (3 days)

Cycle 1                                      10/1/15 – 11/12/2015 (29 days)

Cycle 2 planning            11/16/15 – 11/18/15 (3 days)

Cycle 2                                      11/19/15 – 1/15/16 (31 days)

**MOY Testing**                      **1/19/16 – 1/28/15 (8 days)**

Cycle 3 Planning            2/1/16 – 2/3/16 (3 days)

Cycle 3                                      2/4/16 – 3/24/16 (31 days)

Cycle 4 Planning            4/4/16 – 4/6/16 (3 days)

Cycle 4                                      4/7/16 – 5/20/16 (31 days)

**EOY Testing**                      **5/23/16 – 6/3/16 (9 days)**

### Attachment 3

#### MMS Response to Intervention

Immediately after homeroom attendance each morning, students will be directed to their first period RtI class. RtI is the process of providing high-quality instruction to all students, and monitoring student progress to make instructional decisions. Delaware's Three-Tiered Model is as follows:

- Tier 1 instruction is CORE classroom instruction and includes all students. It is expected that at least 80% of your population meet success through Tier 1 instruction.
- It is expected that every teacher use the district's approved curriculum.
- Tier 2 instruction consists of group and individual research-based interventions for students who make insufficient progress in Tier 1. It is expected that 15% or less of students need Tier 2 interventions.
- Acceptable Tier 2 interventions are PALS, Kahn Academy, preview and acceleration based on LFS strategies, and other district approved interventions.
- Tier 3 instruction is intended to be sustained, intensive interventions for students who make insufficient progress in Tier 1 and Tier 2. It is expected that 5% or less of students need Tier 3 intervention. Students who make insufficient progress in Tier 3 may be identified for special education. Our school uses Math 180 and READ 180 for Tier 3 instruction.

RtI is to begin at 7:55a.m each morning. Initial RtI groups will be determined by teams using the previous spring's SBAC data and available SRI/SMI data. Sixth grade teachers can also use data available to us from the elementary schools. Throughout the year, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Math

Inventory (SMI) will be administered for screening and to adjust RtI groups. The SRI/SMI testing schedule is to be determined by the team in collaboration with the math and ELA teachers. Teams must follow DDOE regulations in screening students, providing interventions, and progress monitoring. Please note the following regulations:

- First screening must be conducted in the first two weeks of school (SRI/SMI).
- Tier 2 interventions (for those applicable students) must be delivered for at least 6 weeks with fidelity, at a minimum of 90 minutes per week in no less than 2 sessions. If a child needs interventions in both reading and math, design an intervention plan that gets them no less than 120 minutes of intervention per week combined. (We are set up for 200 minutes per week.)
- Conduct progress monitoring (curriculum based) to determine continued interventions. If a student has received at least 6 weeks of tier 2 interventions, and are “on trajectory to benchmark with their grade level,” they may no longer require services (DDOE). (If a child shows no progress after 12 weeks of intervention, inform IST team for transition into Tier 3.)
- All at-risk students will be screened at least 3 times per year at regularly spaced intervals.

Every teacher and para will be actively involved daily in the RtI process.

Teams are to collaboratively determine teacher roles as student needs are identified and monitored. RtI time is strictly for reading and math intervention, either with the purpose of supporting struggling students or those who need challenged; and is not time for catching up on missed assignments/tests.

The I-Tracker system, found at [www.dataservice.org](http://www.dataservice.org), is to be used for identifying students, logging student interventions/data, and monitoring progress. See “I-Tracker” in this handbook.

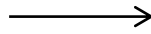
Attachment 4

SCHS RTI Diagnostic Roadmap (As of 10/24/15)

If a student's...

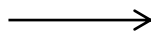
Then, student...

- SRI score places them at grade level...



- Receives vocabulary and comprehension intervention.
- Administered Exiting Assessment

- SRI score places them below grade level...



Academic Tutorial Students

- Administered Words Their Way Spelling Assessment with word study. interventions based upon placement strategies.
- Receive fluency, vocabulary and comprehension interventions.

ARW Students

- Administered San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability.
- Students on grade level will receive vocabulary and comprehension intervention.
- Students below grade level will receive word study/vocabulary, fluency and comprehension interventions.

**Exiting Assessment**

Academic Tutorial

- If at the end of a semester a student meets the guidelines for exiting Academic Tutorial, they will be administered the QRI-3 Reading Inventory to denote grade level reading placement for word recognition, fluency and comprehension to determine movement to ARW.
- If at the end of the semester a student meets the guidelines for exiting ARW, students will be administered the Gates-MacGinitie Vocabulary and Comprehension assessment to determine exit from RTI interventions.

## Attachment 5

### Selbyville Middle School Response to Intervention Plan

#### Overview

At the beginning of the year Universal Screening will be completed school wide producing SRI Lexile levels and SMI Quantile levels. The scores will allow students to be placed in tier groups based on the data. Students will be provided individualized research-based instruction to address his/her needs based on the information gathered from the data analysis. Students will be progress monitored every 6 weeks and groups will be adjusted as needed. In addition, after at least 2 cycles staff members should employ the IST process for students that are not showing progress.

#### Instructional Focus

Intervention activities will focus on needs indicated through data analysis during the time students are in this setting. Curriculum resources that are research-based, as well as align with the Delaware Standards, will be utilized to address student academic needs. In addition, students will receive instruction from a math, language arts, or special education teacher for students in Tier 2/Tier 3. Students who are in Tier 1 will attend an enrichment class with an Exploratory teacher or Team teacher in which instruction will extend the curriculum providing students with opportunities to apply and extend knowledge/skill also enhancing reading as well as vocabulary to continue with the alignment of the school-wide focus.

Curriculum Resources:

| Reading  | Math   |
|--|--|
| Common Core Coaching Text<br>PALS<br>Novels with specific instructional purpose<br>Read works passages & questions<br>6 minute solution<br>Scholastic News Magazines | Carnegie Resources<br>CMP materials<br>Common Core Coaching<br>Cognitive Tutor<br>Quantile Framework resources |

**Plan**

Interventions will be received during the following times:

- Enrichment 7:52-8:22 (up to 150 minutes)
- Tutoring: 1 Exploratory Monday and Wednesday (90 minutes per week)
- Exploratory: Read 180 and Math Enrichment

Note: If a student is in Band/Chorus, a plan will be worked out between teachers utilizing tutoring and/or enrichment

| Tier 1 Students  | Tier 2 Students   | Tier 3 Students   |
|--|---|---|
| Daily:<br>Enrichment with an Exploratory Teacher or extension of classroom material on team<br>In content classrooms during core instruction as their intervention | One Content Area (90 min):<br>3 days of Enrichment<br>Tutoring (45 min. 2 times per week)<br><br>Two Content Areas: (120 min):<br>5 days of Enrichment<br>3 days of weaker area<br>Tutoring and 1-2 Enrichment sessions | One Content Area (120 min):<br>Read 180<br>Math Extended<br>4 days of Enrichment<br><br>Tier 3/Tier 2 Combo (150 min)<br>Read 180 + Enrichment 2-3 days<br>Math Extended + Enrichment 2 -3 days |

### September-October RTI Calendar

| Week of            | Week # in Cycle | Activity  |
|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| September 8, 2014  | -               | ELA/Math Screening  |
| September 15, 2014 | -               | ELA/Math Screening<br>Determine RTI materials   |
| September 22, 2014 | -               | ELA/Math Screening<br>Analyze data<br>Begin constructing tier groups<br>Finalize curriculum materials |
| September 29, 2014 | -               | Finalize tier groups<br>RTI lesson plan outline   |
| October 6, 2014    | 1               | Preview/Remediate   |
| October 13, 2014   | 2               |   |
| October 20, 2014   | 3               |   |
| October 27, 2014   | 4               |   |

**Enrichment: 9/15-9/19-** Practice using six step academic vocabulary process

**9/15-** examine materials to use for RTI grouping

Due to Mr. Macrides by 9/19- tentative personal plan for RTI (see template)

**Enrichment: 9/22-9/26-** Read works passages, 6 minute solution practice, Scholastic news, common core coaching text, CMP materials, etc.

**9/22-** Analyze data, begin constructing RTI groups, and finalize curriculum materials

Due to Mr. Macrides by 9/26- tentative grouping lists

**Enrichment: 9/29-10/3 –** Read works passages, 6 minute solution practice, Scholastic news, common core coaching text, CMP materials, etc.

**9/29-** finalize RTI groups, **send names of Tier 1 students to Diane Simmons by**

**10/1,** finalize tutoring groups, finalize curriculum lesson plans

Due to Mr. Macrides by 10/3- final grouping lists, outline of first RTI lesson (see template)



**\*\*Teachers please inform students by 10/3 of their RTI/ enrichment teacher & location. RTI groups will begin on 10/6/14. \*\***

### **SRI-SMI Testing Schedule**

What are SRI and SMI?

The **Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)** is a research-based, computer-adaptive reading assessment program that measures reading comprehension on the Lexile Framework for Reading. It allows teachers to administer a short assessment that will provide student data which we can use to inform instruction and make accurate placement recommendations. The **Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI)** is a computer-adaptive assessment that monitors growth through Algebra I. The data provides a Quantile score which ties directly to student knowledge of different mathematical concepts/skills.

#### Testing Schedule

Students will be testing with their regularly scheduled math and ELA classes in the library computer lab. Each teacher will have one day to complete this testing. The test generally takes between 30-50 minutes to complete. Make-ups days have been built into the calendar. Betsy will be in the lab on all days to assist the teachers with administering the assessment and will also run all make-up sessions.

| Testing Date                                    | Team/Content       |
|---|--------------------|
| Monday, Sept. 8th                               | Aces- Math         |
| Tuesday, Sept. 9th                              | Aces- ELA          |
| Wednesday, Sept. 10th                           | TB- Math           |
| Thursday, Sept. 11th                            | TB- ELA            |
| Friday, Sept. 12th                              | Arrows- ELA        |
| Monday, September 15th                          | All-Stars ELA      |
| Tuesday, Sept. 16th                             | Rads- ELA          |
| Wednesday, Sept. 17th                           | Rockets- ELA       |
| Thursday, Sept. 18th                            | All-Stars- Math    |
| Friday, Sept. 19th                              | Arrows- Math       |
| Monday, Sept. 22nd                              | Rads- Math         |
| Tuesday, Sept. 23rd                             | Rockets- Math      |
| Wednesday, Sept. 24th &<br>Thursday, Sept. 25th | Make-ups * 7:52 AM |

Attachment 6

| Section                               | Subsections   | Total Possible Points |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Assessments                           | <u>Screening</u><br>Screening Tools<br>Data Points to Verify Risk<br><u>Progress Monitoring</u><br>Progress Monitoring Tools<br>Progress Monitoring Process   | 15                    |
| Data-Based Decision Making            | Decision Making Process<br>Data Systems<br>Responsiveness to Interventions  | 9                     |
| Multilevel Instruction                | <u>Tier 1 Interventions</u><br>Research-Based Curriculum Materials<br>Articulation of Teaching and Learning<br>Standards-Based<br>Exceeding Benchmark<br><br><u>Tier 2 Interventions</u><br>Evidence-Based Intervention<br>Compliments Core Instruction<br>Instructional Characteristics<br>Addition to Primary<br><br><u>Tier 3 Interventions</u><br>Data-Based Intervention Adaptations<br>Instructional Characteristics<br>Relationship to Primary | 33                    |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms | Leadership Personnel<br>School-Based PD<br>Schedules<br>Resources<br>Communication with Parents<br>Involvement of all Staff<br>RTI Teams  | 21                    |
| Fidelity and Evaluations              | Fidelity<br>Evaluation  | 6                     |

Attachment 7

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric  
Georgetown Middle School

| Assessments                 |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
|                             | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| Screening                   |   |   |   |
| Screening Tools             |   |   | SMI/SRI   |
| Universal Screening         |   |   | All students screened   |
| Data Points to Verify Risk  |   | Second data point includes discussions with classroom teachers.                                     | Include additional data from previous school year. (report card, state assessment, summative assessment)  |
| Progress Monitoring         |   |   |   |
| Progress Monitoring Tools   |   | Teacher created   | SRI- Lexile level<br>SMI-quantile<br>SMI and SRI is computer adaptive, thus multiple progress monitoring assessments are available.                               |
| Progress Monitoring Process |   | Occurs every 2 weeks for T2   | Progress monitoring in T2 and T3 should occur weekly.   |
| Data-Based Decision Making  |   |   |   |
|                             | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| Decision Making Process     |   | The team of teachers who are assigned to the student meet during PLCs to discuss the data/progress. | Develop a standardized process for reviewing student data with clear, established decision rules. Involve an administrator in the data review and decision making |

|                                       |   |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
|                                       |   |  | process as much as possible.  |
| Data Systems                          |   | All student data is input into the iTracker data management system.                    | Develop a school-wide process for setting/evaluating student RTI goals which are supported by student data.   |
| Responsiveness to Interventions       |   | Progress monitoring data is teacher-based until the student is re-tested using SRI/SMI | Adopt a progress monitoring tool that will provided valid and reliable progress-monitoring data. Decisions-making criteria should be implemented consistently and accurately. |
|                                       |   |  |   |
| Multilevel Instruction                |   |  |   |
|                                       | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Tier 1 Instruction                    |   |  |   |
| Research-Based Curriculum Materials   |   |  | Common Core ELA and SpringBoard Math  |
| Articulation of Teaching and Learning |   |  | Curriculum Cadre and Grade level PLCs   |
| Standards-Based                       |   |  | CCSS  |
| Exceeding Benchmark                   |   | Enrichment is available to a select number of students.                                | Review the master schedule and staffing to ensure adequate enrichment opportunities.  |
|                                       |   |  |   |
| Tier II Intervention                  |   |  |   |
| Evidence-Based Intervention           |   | ELA and Math – SpringBoard Teacher developed supports                                  | Evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred. No formal processes identified.  |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Complements Core Instruction          |   | ELA and Math – SpringBoard<br>Teacher developed supports                  | TBD- evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred.  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   |   | ELA and Math teachers teach the intervention classes. Classes are smaller than typical class size  |
| Addition to Primary                   |   |   | A stand-alone intervention period is provided daily.   |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Tier III Intervention                 |   |   |  |
| Data-Based Intervention adaptations   |   |   | Systems 44<br>Read 180<br>Math 180   |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | Smaller class size. Staff are trained on the intervention curricula used. | Continually explore PD opportunities in order to increase staff understanding of the intervention curriculum.                            |
| Relationship to Primary               |   |   | The RTI team meets to address the intensive scheduling and intervention needs of T3 students.  |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Leadership Personnel                  |   |   | Recently hired an RTI coordinator  |
| School-Based PD                       |   | Limited PD and training for RTI   | Plan regular PD and training for RTI, especially at the beginning of the school year. All staff should be aware of the importance of RTI |
| Schedules                             |   |   | Daily RTI/enrichment period 8AM-8:40AM   |

|                            |   |  |  |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Resources                  |   |  | Curricular resources have been allocated for reading and math  |
| Communication with Parents |   | Parents are informed when the student transitions to T3 interventions.   | Develop and use a standardized letter that informs parents of:<br>The essential components of RTI. Progress of their child receiving secondary or intensive interventions. Decisions regarding progress. |
| Involvement of all staff   |   |  | Teachers are made aware of RTI at the beginning of the school year. Teams collaborate regularly to discuss the RTI needs of students   |
| RTI Teams                  |   |  | The team is representative of the key staff members. An outline of the GMS RTI/IST process has been created to help guide decisions. The team meets regularly to discuss RTI decisions.                  |
|                            |   |  |  |
| Fidelity and Evaluations   |   |  |  |
|                            | 1 | 2  | 3  |
| Fidelity                   |   | Regular learning walks occur to monitor fidelity to the core curriculum and intervention curricula. Clear procedures for analyzing the processes are not yet | Develop a clear set of procedures that can be used to analyze the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.  |

|            |  |           |  |
|------------|--|-----------|--|
|            |  | in place. |  |
| Evaluation | A clear plan for evaluating the program is not currently in place. |           | <p>Develop a plan to monitor short and long-term goals of the program.</p> <p>Develop a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's interventions and screeners.</p> <p>Walk-through data should be reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency.</p> |

#### Commendations:

- GMS has established a part-time RTI coordinator position. This coordinator plans to review all RTI processes and procedures at GMS.
- GMS has changed their schedule to include a daily (8:00AM to 8:40AM) enrichment/intervention period.

#### Recommendations for Support:

- Establish a research-based progress monitoring tool/assessment that can be conducted weekly. Emphasis should be given to the already available SRI and SMI assessment. The tool should provide valid and reliable progress-monitoring data.
- Develop a standardized process for reviewing student data. Currently, each team conducts their own independent review process. Decisions-making criteria should be implemented consistently and accurately. When possible, an administrator should be part of the discussion.
- Develop RTI training for all staff. Training should cover the basic concepts of RTI as well as the specific details associated with the GMS RTI program.



- Provide support for the understanding of Scholastic reports/data. GMS is concerned with the lack of “real” data associated with Scholastic’s reading Lexile scores.
- IRSD Department of Instruction should conduct periodic “learning walks” to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of the GMS RTI program

## Attachment 8

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric  
Indian River High School

| Assessments                 |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
|                             | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| Screening                   |   |   |   |
| Screening Tools             |   |   | SMI/SRI   |
| Universal Screening         |   |   | All incoming students from SMS are reviewed by the RTI coordinator from IRHS and SMS  |
| Data Points to Verify Risk  |   |   | SRI/SMI<br>Classroom data<br>Teacher recommendations  |
| Progress Monitoring         |   |   |   |
| Progress Monitoring Tools   |   |   | SRI/SMI 5 times per year. Weekly and bi-weekly progress is measured through the various curricular resources.   |
| Progress Monitoring Process |   |   | Occurs every 8 weeks  |
| Data-Based Decision Making  |   |   |   |
|                             | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| Decision Making Process     |   | RTI coordinator confers with the classroom teachers and reviews the data. | Ensure that an administrator is part of the data review and decision making process. Establish a written set of protocols for movement between tiers. |
| Data Systems                |   | Student data is maintained on a school spreadsheet.                       | Develop a school-wide process for setting/evaluating student RTI goals  |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                       |   |   | which are supported by student data.   |
| Responsiveness to Interventions       |   |   | SRI/SMI provides reliable and valid data. Decisions may vary slightly however the addition of an RTI coordinator increases consistency   |
| Multilevel Instruction                |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Tier 1 Instruction                    |   |   |  |
| Research-Based Curriculum Materials   |   |   | CCSS ELA and Math  |
| Articulation of Teaching and Learning |   |   | Curriculum Cadre and Grade level PLCs  |
| Standards-Based                       |   |   | CCSS   |
| Exceeding Benchmark                   |   |   | Enrichment is available to all students who have not been identified as “at risk.” PRIDE period is taught by all teachers in the building. “Pridemen” create the lesson for each grade level |
| Tier II Intervention                  |   |   |  |
| Evidence-Based Intervention           |   | Khan Academy Sadler ELA Vocabulary series | Evaluation of the curriculum is ongoing. No formal processes identified.   |
| Complements Core Instruction          |   | Interventions support the core curriculum | TBD- evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred.  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   |   | ELA and Math teachers teach the intervention classes.  |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                       |   |   | Classes are smaller than typical class size  |
| Addition to Primary                   |   |   | A stand-alone intervention period is provided daily (7:50-8:20).   |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Tier III Intervention                 |   |   |  |
| Data-Based Intervention adaptations   |   |   | Read 180 Khan Academy  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | Smaller class size. Staff are trained on the intervention curricula used. | Continually explore PD opportunities in order to increase staff understanding of the intervention curriculum.                            |
| Relationship to Primary               |   |   | The RTI coordinator handles scheduling and intervention needs of T3 students.  |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Leadership Personnel                  |   |   | Recently hired RTI coordinator   |
| School-Based PD                       |   | Limited PD and training for RTI   | Plan regular PD and training for RTI, especially at the beginning of the school year. All staff should be aware of the importance of RTI |
| Schedules                             |   |   | RTI/enrichment period 7:50-8:20AM on M, W and F  |
| Resources                             |   |   | Curricular resources have been allocated for reading and math  |
| Communication with Parents            |   | Parents are informed when the student transitions to T3                   | Develop and use a standardized letter that informs parents   |

|                          |                  |   |  |
|--------------------------|------------------|---|--|
|                          |                  | interventions   | of:<br>1. The essential components of RTI<br>2. Progress of their child receiving secondary or intensive interventions<br>3. Decisions regarding progress.                                       |
| Involvement of all staff |                  |   | Teachers are made aware of RTI at the beginning of the school year. Teams collaborate regularly to discuss the RTI needs of students. Face-to-face and emails are used to communicate with staff |
| RTI Teams                |                  | The team is representative of the key staff members. Structures and processes are still developing. The leadership team meets monthly during the leadership meeting to discuss RTI. | Develop a clear set of processes to help guide RTI decisions.  |
|                          |                  |   |  |
| Fidelity and Evaluations |                  |   |  |
|                          | 1                | 2   | 3  |
| Fidelity                 |                  | Regular learning walks occur to monitor fidelity to the core curriculum and intervention curricula. Clear procedures for analyzing the processes are not yet in place.              | Develop a clear set of procedures that can be used to analyze the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.  |
| Evaluation               | A clear plan for |   | Develop a plan to  |

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | evaluating the program is not currently in place. |  | monitor short and long-term goals of the program.<br>Develop a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's interventions and screeners.<br>Walk-through data should be reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency. |
|--|---|--|---|

Commendations:

- IRHS has established a part-time RTI coordinator position. This coordinator plans to review all RTI processes and procedures at IRHS.
- IRHS has changed their schedule to include a Monday, Wednesday and Friday 7:50AM to 8:20AM enrichment/intervention period - Preparing Responsible Individuals Dedicated to Excellence (PRIDE).

Recommendations for Support:

- Develop a standardized process for student transitions between tiers. Currently, each team conducts their own independent review process. Decisions-making criteria should be implemented consistently and accurately. When possible, an administrator should be part of the discussion.
- Develop RTI training for all staff. Training should cover the basic concepts of RTI as well as the specific details associated with the IRHS RTI program.
- IRSD Department of Instruction should conduct periodic "learning walks" to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of the IRHS RTI program.

## Attachment 9

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric  
Millsboro Middle School

| Assessments                 |   |  |   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
|                             | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Screening                   |   |  |   |
| Screening Tools             |   |  | SMI/SRI within the first two weeks – All students   |
| Universal Screening         |   |  | All incoming students are reviewed by their team of teachers. The screenings occur during the Fall, Winter and Spring |
| Data Points to Verify Risk  |   |  | SRI/SMI<br>Classroom data<br>Teacher recommendations  |
|                             |   |  |   |
| Progress Monitoring         |   |  |   |
| Progress Monitoring Tools   |   |  | SRI/SMI   |
| Progress Monitoring Process |   | Occurs every other week. Enrichment screening occurs every 10 weeks. | Develop a standardized set of procedures to analyze students' progress data   |
|                             |   |  |   |
| Data-Based Decision Making  |   |  |   |
|                             | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Decision Making Process     |   | Classroom grades, progress monitoring and teacher recommendations    | Establish a written set of protocols (decision rules) for student movement between tiers.                             |
| Data Systems                |   | All student data is input into the iTracker data management system.  | Develop a school-wide process for setting/evaluating student RTI goals which are supported by student data.           |

|                                       |   |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Responsiveness to Interventions       |   |  | SRI/SMI provides reliable and valid data. Decisions may vary slightly however the addition of an RTI coordinator increases consistency  |
|                                       |   |  |   |
| Multilevel Instruction                |   |  |   |
|                                       | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Tier 1 Instruction                    |   |  |   |
| Research-Based Curriculum Materials   |   |  | SpringBoard ELA and Math  |
| Articulation of Teaching and Learning |   |  | Curriculum Cadre and Grade level PLCs   |
| Standards-Based                       |   |  | CCSS  |
| Exceeding Benchmark                   |   |  | Enrichment is available to all students who have not been identified as “at risk.” Enrichment periods are developed by the teachers and are related to a particular area of interest. |
|                                       |   |  |   |
| Tier II Intervention                  |   |  |   |
| Evidence-Based Intervention           |   | Khan Academy<br>Perfection Learning<br>Vocabulary series | Evaluation of the intervention curriculum is ongoing. No formal processes identified.   |
| Complements Core Instruction          |   | Interventions support the core curriculum                | TBD- evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred.   |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   |  | ELA and Math teachers teach the intervention classes. Classes are smaller than typical class size   |



|                                       |   |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Addition to Primary                   |   |  | A stand-alone intervention period is provided daily (7:55-8:35).   |
|                                       |   |  |  |
| Tier III Intervention                 |   |  |  |
| Data-Based Intervention adaptations   |   |  | Math/Read 180<br>Khan Academy<br>Sadler<br>Systems 44  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | Staff are trained on the intervention curricula used.<br>Smaller class size. | Continually explore PD opportunities in order to increase staff understanding of the intervention curriculum.                            |
| Relationship to Primary               |   |  | The RTI coordinator, administrator and the student's team handle scheduling and intervention needs of T3 students.                       |
|                                       |   |  |  |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms |   |  |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2  | 3  |
| Leadership Personnel                  |   |  | Recently hired RTI coordinator. Created a schedule to support RTI initiatives.   |
| School-Based PD                       |   | Limited PD and training for RTI  | Plan regular PD and training for RTI, especially at the beginning of the school year. All staff should be aware of the importance of RTI |
| Schedules                             |   |  | RTI/enrichment period 7:55-8:35AM daily  |
| Resources                             |   |  | Curricular resources have been allocated   |

|                            |   |   |  |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
|                            |   |   | for reading and math RTI. A new RTI coordinator has been hired.  |
| Communication with Parents |   | A standard letter that clearly outlines RTI is sent to parents at the beginning of the school year. | Develop and use a parent letter that informs parents of progress of their child receiving secondary or intensive interventions   |
| Involvement of all staff   |   |   | A description of the program is provided in the MMS handbook. Teacher teams have weekly meetings and formal meetings to discuss student progress after each intervention period.     |
| RTI Teams                  |   |   | The team is representative of the key staff members. Structures and processes are in process and continue to develop. The team meets regularly to discuss student data and progress. |
|                            |   |   |  |
| Fidelity and Evaluations   |   |   |  |
|                            | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Fidelity                   |   | Regular learning walks occur to monitor fidelity to the core curriculum and intervention curricula. | Develop a clear set of procedures that can be used to analyze the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.  |
| Evaluation                 |   | A clear plan for  | Develop a plan to  |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  | evaluating the short and long term goals of the program is not currently in place. | monitor short and long-term goals of the program.<br>Develop a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's interventions and screeners.<br>Walk-through data should be reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency. |
|--|--|--|---|

Commendations:

- MMS has hired a staff member who can coordinate the school's RTI program.
- MMS has changed their schedule to include a daily enrichment/intervention period.
- Dr. Jerns has a clear understanding of the benefits of RTI and the laws associated with program implementation.

Recommendations for Support:

- Develop a standardized process for student transitions between tiers. Currently, each team conducts their own independent review process. Decisions-making criteria should be implemented consistently and accurately. When possible, an administrator should be part of the discussion.
- Develop a system for evaluating the overall success of the RTI program. The evaluation should consider the short and long term program goals, the effectiveness of intervention curricula and screeners, and learning walk findings.
- IRSD Department of Instruction should conduct periodic "learning walks" to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of the IRHS RTI program.

## Attachment 10

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric  
Sussex Central High School

| Assessments                |   |  |   |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
|                            | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Screening                  |   |  |   |
| Screening Tools            |   |  | SMI/SRI   |
| Universal Screening        |   | “At risk” students are screened. Previous school year grades, state test scores and teacher recommendations are considered prior to screening. | Explore the ability to screen all incoming students at the end of 8 <sup>th</sup> grade or at the beginning of 9 <sup>th</sup> grade.   |
| Data Points to Verify Risk |   |  | SRI/SMI<br>Classroom data<br>Teacher recommendations<br>State test data<br>QRI-3 Reading Inventory<br>Gates-MacGinitie Vocabulary and Comprehension assessment<br>Administered San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability                      |
| Progress Monitoring        |   |  |   |
| Progress Monitoring Tools  |   | SRI/SMI occurs three times per year. Teacher created formative and summative assessments.  | Evaluate the ability to progress monitor using a standardized assessment.<br>Standardized tools should:<br>Establish minimum acceptable growth targets<br>Provide benchmarks<br>Provide reliable and valid information for the performance-level. |
| Progress Monitoring        |   | ELA- monitoring  | Review the processes for  |

|                                 |   |  |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Process                         |   | occurs at the end of each semester and is ongoing through formative assessments during Academic Tutorial classes and Academic Reading and Writing classes.   | reviewing progress monitoring data to ensure that decision-making rules are applied consistently.  |
|                                 |   |  |  |
| Data-Based Decision Making      |   |  |  |
|                                 | 1 | 2  | 3  |
| Decision Making Process         |   | Reading coach and Math coach confers with the classroom teachers and the administration to review student data. SCHS uses the Instructional Support Team process to assist with Tier determination. Clear procedures have been established for student movement between ELA tiers. | Ensure that accurate data is gathered through validated methods prior to the decision making process. Formalize the process for student movement between Math tiers. |
| Data Systems                    |   | Student data is maintained through the iTracker data management system.  | Develop a school-wide process for setting/evaluating student RTI goals which are supported by student data.  |
| Responsiveness to Interventions |   | Teachers' formative records and SMI/SRI data are used to produce progress monitoring data. Math and ELA coached support the development of assessments used to monitor student data.   | Explore the adoption of a standardized progress monitoring tool.   |
|                                 |   |  |  |

| Multilevel Instruction                |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| <b>Tier 1 Instruction</b>             |   |   |   |
| Research-Based Curriculum Materials   |   |   | Common Core ELA<br>SpringBoard Math   |
| Articulation of Teaching and Learning |   |   | Curriculum Cadre and Grade level PLCs   |
| Standards-Based                       |   |   | CCSS  |
| Exceeding Benchmark                   |   | Enrichment opportunities are limited within the current RTI system.   | Explore opportunities to provide enrichment to students who have exceeded benchmarks.   |
|                                       |   |   |   |
| <b>Tier II Intervention</b>           |   |   |   |
| Evidence-Based Intervention           |   | Khan Academy-Math<br>Sadler - ELA vocabulary series   | Evaluation of the curriculum is ongoing. No formal processes identified.  |
| Complements Core Instruction          |   | Interventions support the core curriculum   | TBD- evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred.   |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | ELA and Math teachers teach the intervention classes. Academic Reading and Writing and Academic Tutorial classes are smaller than typical class size. Double blocked math classes are typical class size. | Explore opportunities to reduce the number of students included in T2 math support classes.<br>Explore the dosage associated with T2 and T3 ELA and Math classes. |
| Addition to Primary                   |   | Secondary interventions supplement the core instruction in ELA.   | Math classes are double blocked for all students, including students needing T2 or T3 support.  |
|                                       |   |   |   |
| <b>Tier III Intervention</b>          |   |   |   |
| Data-Based Intervention               |   |   | Words Your Way<br>Khan Academy  |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| adaptations                           |   |   |  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | Academic tutorial classes provide a smaller class size. Staff are trained on the intervention curricula used. | Continually explore PD opportunities in order to increase staff understanding of the intervention curriculum.                                    |
| Relationship to Primary               |   |   | The instructional coaches, administration and intervention teachers review the individual student data to make intensive intervention decisions. |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Leadership Personnel                  |   | Administrator is assigned to RTI coordination   | Continue to educate staff on the RTI framework and the importance of RTI within the school   |
| School-Based PD                       |   | Limited PD and training for RTI   | Plan regular PD and training for RTI, especially at the beginning of the school year. All staff should be aware of the importance of RTI         |
| Schedules                             |   | Academic Tutorial (T3)<br>Academic Reading and Writing (T2)<br>Double blocked math (T2 and T3)                | Work to decrease class sizes for math T2 and T3 RTI students.  |
| Resources                             |   |   | Curricular resources have been allocated for reading and math  |
| Communication with Parents            |   | Parent letters are being developed  | Develop and use a standardized letter that informs parents of:<br>1. The essential components of RTI<br>2. Progress of their child               |

|                          |   |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
|                          |   |   | receiving secondary or intensive interventions<br>3. Decisions regarding progress.   |
| Involvement of all staff |   | Limited RTI training at the beginning of the school year. Teams collaborate regularly to discuss the RTI needs of students. Face-to-face interactions and emails are used to communicate with staff | Teachers should be made aware of RTI at the beginning of the school year. Teams collaborate regularly to discuss the RTI needs of students. Face-to-face and emails are used to communicate with staff |
| RTI Teams                |   | The team is representative of the key staff members. Structures and processes are still developing. The RTI team meets when necessary.  | Develop a clear set of processes to help guide RTI decisions for Math.   |
|                          |   |   |  |
| Fidelity and Evaluations |   |   |  |
|                          | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Fidelity                 |   | Regular learning walks occur to monitor fidelity to the core curriculum and intervention curricula. Clear procedures for analyzing the processes are not yet in place.                              | Develop a clear set of procedures that can be used to analyze the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.  |
| Evaluation               |   | A clear plan for evaluating the program is not currently in place. Walk-through data is reviewed to monitor fidelity & efficiency.  | Develop a plan to monitor short and long-term goals of the program. Develop a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's interventions and screeners.   |



#### Commendations:

- SCHS has assigned an assistant principal to oversee RTI within the school.
- SCHS has changed their schedule to allow for ELA and Math RTI. Academic Tutorial and Academic Reading and Writing classes have been developed to support ELA RTI. All math classes have been double blocked to provide additional math support.
- SCHS has developed an “RTI Diagnostic Roadmap” and “Tier Movement Checklists” to support the decision making process of the team.

#### Recommendations for Support:

- Develop a standardized process for student transitions between Math tiers. Currently, the SCHS “Diagnostic Roadmap” provides an outline for movement “into” and “out” of T2 ELA RTI services. It is suggested that SCHS develops a similar roadmap for math interventions.
- Increase parental awareness through the development of a standardized letter informing parents of students transitioning to T2 and T3 services.
- Formalize the progress monitoring procedures for all students. SCHS should explore standardized tools for progress monitoring. T2 and T3 RTI require weekly progress monitoring.
- Explore opportunities to provide enrichment to students who have exceeded benchmarks. Enrichment may occur during double blocked math classes; however there is no formal process for evaluating whether this is taking place.
- Evaluate and monitor T2 and T3 class size and weekly sessions. T2 requires small group intervention for 90-minutes per week, not less than 2 sessions per week. T3 requires small group intervention for 120 minutes per week and not less than 4 sessions per week.
- IRSD Department of Instruction should conduct periodic “learning walks” to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of the IRHS RTI program.

## Attachment 11

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric  
Selbyville Middle School

| Assessments                 |   |  |   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
|                             | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Screening                   |   |  |   |
| Screening Tools             |   |  | SMI/SRI within the first two weeks – All students within the classroom  |
| Universal Screening         |   |  | All incoming students are reviewed by their team of teachers. The screenings occur during the Fall, Winter and Spring                                       |
| Data Points to Verify Risk  |   |  | SRI/SMI<br>Classroom data<br>Teacher recommendations  |
|                             |   |  |   |
| Progress Monitoring         |   |  |   |
| Progress Monitoring Tools   |   | Occurs formatively within the classroom and is developed by the classroom teacher    | Adopt a formal process for progress monitoring. Progress monitoring tools should include benchmarks and provide reliable and valid information to the staff |
| Progress Monitoring Process |   | No standardized set of procedures. Teachers utilize classroom formative assessments. | Develop a standardized set of procedures to analyze students' progress data   |
|                             |   |  |   |
| Data-Based Decision Making  |   |  |   |
|                             | 1 | 2  | 3   |
| Decision Making Process     |   |  | Classroom grades, progress monitoring, screening data and   |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                       |   |   | teacher recommendations.<br>RTI coordinator attends PLCs to assist with the review of data.  |
| Data Systems                          |   | Student data is maintained within SAM           | Explore the possibility of setting/evaluating goals for individual students within the iTracker system   |
| Responsiveness to Interventions       |   |   | SRI/SMI provides reliable and valid data. Decisions may vary slightly however an RTI coordinator increases consistency                           |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Multilevel Instruction                |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Tier I Instruction                    |   |   |  |
| Research-Based Curriculum Materials   |   |   | Common Core ELA and SpringBoard Math   |
| Articulation of Teaching and Learning |   |   | Curriculum Cadre and Grade level PLCs  |
| Standards-Based                       |   |   | CCSS   |
| Exceeding Benchmark                   |   |   | Enrichment is available to all students who have not been identified as “at risk.” Enrichment activities are taught by the exploratory teachers. |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Tier II Intervention                  |   |   |  |
| Evidence-Based Intervention           |   | Common Coach<br>Quantile.com<br>PALS<br>Sadlier | Evaluation of the intervention curriculum is ongoing. No formal  |

|                                       |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                       |   | Perfection Learning<br>Khan Academy   | processes identified.  |
| Complements Core Instruction          |   | Interventions support the core curriculum   | TBD- evaluation of the curriculum has not occurred.  |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   |   | ELA and Math teachers teach the intervention classes. Classes are smaller than typical class size                  |
| Addition to Primary                   |   | Intervention occurs during Exploratory time frame   | Explore opportunities for a stand-alone period.  |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Tier III Intervention                 |   |   |  |
| Data-Based Intervention adaptations   |   | Cognitive Tutor<br>Read 180<br>Math 180   | Evaluation of the intervention curriculum is ongoing   |
| Instructional Characteristics         |   | Interventions are computer adaptive to meet the individual needs of the students. Staff are trained on the intervention curricula used. Smaller class size. | Continually explore PD opportunities in order to increase staff understanding of the intervention curriculum.      |
| Relationship to Primary               |   |   | The RTI coordinator, administrator and the students' team handle scheduling and intervention needs of T3 students. |
|                                       |   |   |  |
| Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms |   |   |  |
|                                       | 1 | 2   | 3  |
| Leadership Personnel                  |   |   | RTI coordinator has been assigned to oversee the RTI program. Created a  |

|                            |  |  |   |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|
|                            |  |  | schedule to support RTI initiatives.  |
| School-Based PD            |  |  | Staff receive information from the RTI coordinator related to the RTI program regularly.  |
| Schedules                  |  | RTI/enrichment period 7:55-8:22AM daily. See SMS RTI plan for complete schedule. | Explore opportunities to develop a schedule for intervention that will not interfere with scheduled electives.  |
| Resources                  |  |  | Curricular resources have been allocated for reading and math RTI. A new RTI coordinator has been hired.  |
| Communication with Parents |  |  | A standard parent letter that clearly outlines RTI has been created for SMS. Updates are given to parents regularly   |
| Involvement of all staff   |  |  | A description of the program is provided to the SMS staff. Staff participate in either enrichment or intervention. Teacher teams have weekly meetings and formal meetings to discuss student progress after each intervention period. |
| RTI Teams                  |  |  | The team is representative of the key staff members. Structures and processes are in process and continue to develop. The team  |

|                          |   |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
|                          |   |   | meets regularly to discuss student data and progress.   |
| Fidelity and Evaluations |   |   |   |
|                          | 1 | 2   | 3   |
| Fidelity                 |   | Regular learning walks occur to monitor fidelity to the core curriculum and intervention curricula. | Develop a clear set of procedures that can be used to analyze the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.   |
| Evaluation               |   | A clear plan for evaluating the short and long term goals of the program is not currently in place. | Develop a plan to monitor short and long-term goals of the program.<br>Develop a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's interventions and screeners.<br>Walk-through data should be reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency. |

Commendations:

- SMS has allocated a staff member to coordinate the school's RTI program.
- SMS has created a comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions document and an SMS RTI plan document. These documents have the potential to provide a great deal of clarity for schools.
- SMS has created a repository of RTI information associated with the school.

Recommendations for Support:

- Explore alternate methods of screening which will give the teachers clear indicators of student weakness. SRI/SMI reports do not specify specific areas of weakness for students.
- Examine the adoption of a schedule that will not pull students from their exploratory if they require intervention services.
- Develop a system for evaluating the overall success of the RTI program. The evaluation should consider the short and long term program goals, the effectiveness of intervention curricula and screeners, and learning walk findings.
- IRSD Department of Instruction should conduct periodic “learning walks” to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of the IRHS RTI program.

## Secondary RTI Fidelity Implementation Findings

Fall 2015

### Strengths

- ELA and Math teachers have a strong understanding of the RTI framework.
- All secondary schools have made positive progress with schedules since the 2014-2015 school year.
- Coordinators have been hired, or existing staff have been assigned the RTI coordinator role.
- All schools are utilizing SRI and SMI to screen students.



## Areas of Need

- Additional SMI/SRI Professional Development would be helpful
- Tier 2 and 3 interventions are varied across the district
- Some non-core secondary staff do not understand the RTI framework.
- Procedures for Tier transition are inconsistent among district schools and, at times among individual schools.

## Areas of Need

- Additional SMI/SRI Professional Development would be helpful
- Tier 2 and 3 interventions are varied across the district
- Some non-core secondary staff do not understand the RTI framework.
- Procedures for Tier transition are inconsistent among district schools and, at times among individual schools.

## Recommendations

- Collaborate with all IRSD secondary schools to refine existing programs.
- Create a district repository of RTI secondary resources.
- Monitor the frequency and dosage requirements for RTI within the schools.
- Develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention curriculums.
- Continued monitoring and feedback from the IRSD Department of Instruction.

## **Appendix G**

### **SECONDARY PRINCIPAL MEETINGS SUMMARY**

Regular secondary principal meetings provided an excellent forum to discuss RTI programs, data findings and opportunities for improvement.

During the 2015-2016 School year, substantial time and energy were devoted to providing support to middle school and high school principals as they analyzed their respective RTI programs. The processes of critically analyzing their programs was extremely important, as the schools had all recently launched new RTI programs, or were in the process of restructuring existing programs. To support schools, efforts were made to analyze current progress, to determine areas of strength and weaknesses and to provide recommendations. Most importantly, the district provided support to schools as they worked to address their areas of RTI need.

To prepare to support secondary school RTI implementation efforts, I worked in the fall and early winter of 2015 to examine the current landscape of RTI within the district's middle schools and high schools. I surveyed each school using a Response to Intervention Fidelity Rubric (Center on Response to Intervention, 2014). Attachment 1 outlines the questions within the rubric. As part of the evaluation process, I interviewed school personnel. Interviews, framed by the questions within the rubric, provided me with an opportunity to have a better understanding of each school's RTI efforts. With valuable information gathered through the interviews, I was able to develop RTI support which, in part, was formally structured within the monthly Secondary Principals' meetings.

In order to provide the secondary principals with information related to the evaluation processes, I reviewed the RTI Fidelity Rubric with the team during the September 2015 Principals' meeting. I shared the process that I would use to survey members of their RTI team and my plan for reporting out findings. The principals were initially surprised with the level of detail associated with the survey. Principals were provided an opportunity to reflect on their current programs and how modifications could be made to improve supports for students. Some expressed concern that their school would not score well and thus would require some form of corrective action. I reassured the principals that the survey was only a mechanism for helping to determine the areas where the schools were implementing RTI well and the areas in need of attention. Regardless of their concern, the review of the survey questions sparked a valuable conversation between the principals about the RTI implementation within their respective schools.

Over the next two months, I interviewed members of each school's RTI team and compiled findings. Although schools received a numeric value associated with the findings, I think the most valuable feedback was the feedback provided through individualized strengths, areas of need and recommendations.

During the December 2015 Secondary Principals' meeting, the principals reviewed their school-specific survey findings. Sharing the findings was an opportunity to provide not only individualized school feedback, but also a district perspective of secondary RTI implementation progress. After receiving a comprehensive report of findings including strengths, areas of need and recommendations, principals asked questions about the survey findings and report out on the progress made subsequent to survey completion. Remarkably, the schools had

made a tremendous amount of progress since the survey was conducted. The feedback received from the principals was that completing the survey and reflecting on their RTI programs prompted them to make modifications to their programs. In addition to individual school progress, I shared district strengths, areas of need and recommendations with the secondary principals, the Supervisor of Secondary Instruction, the Director of Instruction and the Superintendent.

### **Strengths**

1. *ELA and Math teachers have a strong understanding of the RTI framework.* As revealed during the interviews, in each building, ELA and Math teachers are the primary individuals responsible for implementing the interventions and thus have a thorough understanding of RTI. In addition to other responsibilities, they are also responsible for assisting the RTI coordinator and the instructional coaches in their buildings as data considerations occur.
2. *All secondary schools have proactively considered RTI when developing their master schedules.* According to information obtained through the interview process, all schools have developed whole-school schedules that support the implementation of RTI initiatives.
3. *RTI coordinators have been assigned at each secondary school.* The role of an RTI coordinator is a new position for district schools. Regardless, the principals indicated that this position is essential to the appropriate implementation of RTI within their schools. The coordinators are primarily responsible for schedule coordination and student data management. They are the “go to individual” within the school when considering RTI.
4. *All schools are utilizing Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) to screen students.* The fact that all schools are using the same screening tool allows for a larger IRSD sample size for data considerations. Data associated with these screeners can be compared across multiple grades if schools continue to use the same screener.

## Areas of Need and Steps Taken

1. *Additional Scholastic Math Inventory /Scholastic Reading Inventory professional development would be helpful.* All those interviewed indicated that ongoing professional development support is needed for staff as they use SRI and SMI to screen students. According to those interviewed, teachers desire a better understanding of how the data can support student learning.
- The development of a plan for ongoing SRI and SMI professional development is in place for the upcoming school year. The district has contacted Scholastic and representatives will be facilitating professional development. Although staff understand the process for assessing progress, a more proficient understanding of SRI and SMI will be helpful to staff. District staff and Scholastic professionals will provide support for staff members who implement SRI and SMI. The focus of the professional development will be data considerations.
2. *Tier 2 and 3 intervention curricula vary across the district.* It is difficult for the district to provide high level professional development to schools with the implementation of multiple intervention curricula. In addition, the ability to compare student progress is difficult when considering varying interventions and assessments. It is recommended that schools develop an ongoing process to assess the Tier 2 and 3 intervention curricula.
- The IRSD Department of Instruction will assist with the evaluation of intervention curricula. A rubric has been adopted for RTI assessment purposes. Portions of the AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric will be used to assist with decisions related to the success and continued use intervention curricula.
- Throughout the remainder of the 2015 school year, during Secondary Principals' meetings, various math and language arts curricula were reviewed. The IRSD Department of Instruction was not interested in making a selection during the meetings; only to introduce the curricula to the principals so they may, in turn, explore the validity of the intervention within their schools with their respective leadership teams. The IRSD Department of Instruction has recently adopted new math and language arts intervention curricula based on school feedback. The AIR RTI Fidelity Rubric categories were considered when making curriculum selections.

3. Although schools have developed guiding documents to assist with RTI implementation, these documents are not always shared with other district secondary schools.
- An online repository for storage and sharing of RTI documents has been created and has improved consistency and efficiency. This Schoology site provides a platform for schools to upload RTI documents and to communicate with others about RTI. The logistics of the site have been shared with the schools' RTI coordinators via email. Feedback from the principals has been positive as they have been able use existing documents to create resources and/or modify existing documents to meet the needs of their schools. IRSD district instructional staff monitor and update the site with RTI resources when appropriate.
4. *Some non-ELA and math secondary staff members do not fully understand the RTI framework.* Rubric and interview findings indicate that those teachers who do not teach language arts and math, or provide direct intervention support to students are not aware of RTI systems within the school. In order to have school-wide buy-in to the RTI program, the entire school community should be aware of system processes.
- Training should cover the basic concepts of RTI as well as the specific details associated with the school RTI programing. To assist schools with providing their staff with RTI information, a presentation has been developed that can be shared with all staff. This presentation provides an overview of RTI and can be modified to include school-specific information. Schools were encouraged to share this presentation with their respective staff at the beginning of the school year. Attachment 6 is the presentation that was modified for the Sussex Central High School staff. A presentation has also been developed for the IRSD board of education. The presentation was provided to members of the curriculum committee, which includes members of the board. Some members of the committee were not aware of the comprehensive nature of the RTI programs within the schools.
5. *Procedures for Tier transition are inconsistent among district schools and, at times among individual schools.* I found that the processes associated with student movement from Tier 2 to Tier 3 interventions were not uniform within the schools, and are at times subjective. Although it was clear that the staff reviewed student progress monitoring data, the decision making process was not always well established and/or documented.

- Attachments 3-5 were developed by the IRSD Department of Instruction to facilitate the decision making processes for schools. These documents were developed using a combination of existing documents developed by district schools and were reviewed with the principals during subsequent monthly meetings. In addition, these documents were uploaded to the Schoology site and explained to the district's secondary school RTI coordinators.
  - Principals were asked to share student RTI grouping information during Secondary Principals' meetings that coincided with the dates on which tier transitions had recently occurred. The IRSD Department of Instruction staff analyzed the processes shared and provided recommendations based on the information shared. Principals were provided an opportunity to review their data and discuss the rationale for Tier 2 and Tier 3 groupings. Through this review, it was clear that the schools now have a firm understanding of how to best organize students. The principals have created spreadsheets that illustrate student scores from universal screenings from the fall, or from screening during the spring of the previous year.
6. *Consistent checks of the RTI fidelity and overall success of the program are needed.* No processes exist to assess the overall progress or processes of the RTI programs were found. In order to continually assess the effectiveness of the programs, consistent and formal processes are needed.
- Once the rubric findings were shared with the IRSD Department of Instruction, staff from the department was tasked with supporting RTI within the district's secondary schools. The district's secondary literacy specialist was empowered with the responsibility of further analyzing RTI progress within secondary schools.
  - During the second half of the 2015-2016 school year, regular secondary RTI coordinator meetings were held. These meetings were led by the IRSD secondary literacy specialist. Topics of meetings included:
    - A review of RTI process
    - The status of current reading and math interventions
    - Guidance and tools used to support interventions
    - Tier 2 and 3 entrance and exit criteria
    - Progress monitoring tools and procedures



In addition to the recommendations, and subsequent efforts to improve programming, a district Response to Intervention policy was developed. The policy will help to formalize district RTI expectations for schools. Although the policy is broad, it is accompanied by specific procedures that are aligned to Delaware Code. Once approved, the policy was reviewed with all principals. Like all policies within the IRSD, schools are expected to implement the policy as written.

As identified, the IRSD has devoted much time and energy to analyze and improve RTI at the secondary level. The level of support for the district's secondary schools is evidence of the commitment to improved RTI programs in the district's secondary schools. According to the IRSD Supervisor of Secondary Instruction, the regular progress checks have ensured that all schools were compliant for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year. Because these programs are still relatively new, support will be imperative for continued program growth. The districts commitment to an annual review of school RTI programming will help to ensure that schools continue to implement their programs with fidelity.

## **References**

Title 14 Education Delaware Administrative Code. 12.0 Response to Intervention Procedures. Retrieved from <http://dedoe.schoolwires.net/domain/72>

Center on Response to Intervention at American Institute for Research. (November 2014). RTI Fidelity Implementation Rubric. Retrieved from [http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/RTI\\_Fidelity\\_Rubric.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/RTI_Fidelity_Rubric.pdf)

## Attachment 1

### RTI Fidelity Rubric

#### 1. Assessments

##### Screening

- Screening tools-Is the screening tool reliable?
- Universal Screening-Is there screening of all students with adequate procedures for screening more than once per year?
- Data Points to Verify Risk- Are screeners are used in concert with at least two other data sources?

##### Progress Monitoring

- Progress Monitoring Tools- Do tools have alternate forms, specify minimum levels of acceptable growth, provide benchmarks? Are the tools reliable and valid?
- Progress Monitoring Process- What is the frequency of progress monitoring? Are procedures in place to ensure accurate implementation?

#### 2. Data-Based Decision Making

- Decision Making Process- Is the process for decision making data-driven and operationalized? Does the process involve a broad base of stakeholders?
- Data Systems- Does the system allow users to access individual student data? Is data entered in a timely manner? Can users represent data graphically? Is there a process for evaluating goals?
- Responsiveness to Interventions- Are decisions about progress based on reliable and valid progress monitoring data and is decision-making criteria implemented accurately?

#### 3. Multilevel Instruction

##### Tier 1 Instruction

- Research-Based Curriculum Materials- Are curriculum materials research based?
- Articulation of Teaching and Learning-

- Standards-Based
  - Exceeding Benchmark
- Tier 2 Interventions
- Evidence-Based Intervention
  - Complements Core Instruction
  - Instructional Characteristics
  - Addition to Primary
- Tier 3 Interventions
- Data-Based Intervention Adaptations
  - Instructional Characteristics
  - Relationship to Primary
4. Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms
- Leadership Personnel
  - School Based PD
  - Schedules
  - Resources
  - Communication with Parents
  - Communication with and Involvement of all Staff
  - RTI Teams
5. Fidelity and Evaluation
- Fidelity
  - Evaluation

## Attachment 2

### Secondary Principal's Agenda 12/11/15

- CTE Future Pathways and CCR Counselor Training
- Testing Updates
- AVA as a tool for instruction (IAB's) (Mike Williams)
- SAT/Smarter for 11<sup>th</sup> grade
- Whole District and Individual School RTI survey results (Jay Owens)
- A More Targeted Approach to Reading Interventions (Amy Sheridan)
- Reading in Secondary Content Area Classrooms (Amy Sheridan)
- Building Snapshot (Carver Academy)

TITLE 14 EDUCATION DELAWARE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

12.0 Response to Intervention Procedures.

12.1 Each public agency shall establish and implement procedures to determine whether a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions (RTI) for reading and mathematics.

12.3 Instructional screening instruments used as part of RTI procedures shall be norm referenced or curriculum based and progress monitoring instruments used as part of RTI procedures shall be curriculum based.

Tier I instructional screenings for reading and mathematics at the secondary level shall be conducted for students at risk of academic failure at least three (3) times each regular school year at routine and fairly spaced intervals. The first screening shall be conducted within two (2) weeks of the beginning of the regular school year, or within two (2) weeks of the child's entry into school.

12.6.2 Children who score at or below the 25th percentile on a norm referenced test or the designated cut point on a curriculum based measure for any instructional screening, shall be provided Tier 2 interventions.

12.7.1 Tier 2 intervention shall be in addition to regularly scheduled core instruction in the general education curriculum, and shall be delivered in small group, at a minimum of ninety (90) minutes per week in session periods appropriate to age and development, but not less than two (2) sessions per week. In the case of a student identified in need of intervention in both reading and math, the intervention shall be designed by the instructional support team proportionate to student need, but not less than one hundred twenty (120) minutes per week.

12.7.2 Tier 2 interventions shall be delivered for at least 6 school weeks. Progress shall be monitored weekly against established benchmarks.

12.8.1 Tier 3 intervention shall be in addition to regularly scheduled core instruction in the general education curriculum, and shall be delivered in groups smaller than those for intervention delivered in Tier 2, at a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) minutes per week in session periods appropriate to age and development, but not less than four (4) sessions per week. In the case of a student identified in need of intervention in both reading and math, the intervention shall be designed by the instructional support team proportionate to student need, but not less than one hundred eighty (180) minutes per week.

Attachment 4

|  |
|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Response to Intervention</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intervention Plan</b></p> |
|--|

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attending Dist. /School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_ General Ed. Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Case Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Problem Solving Meeting # \_\_\_\_\_

| Participant's Name | Title/Relationship to student |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |
|                    |                               |

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| <p><b>1. DEFINE THE PROBLEM:</b></p> |
|--------------------------------------|



**Points to consider:** Identify the area to be targeted for intervention. Apply the R.I.O.T. (R=Records Reviewed, I= Intervention of Teacher, Parent, Child, O=Observation, T=Test) approach across the four domains to determine current levels of performance. Identify the problem areas.

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Environment (R.I.O.T.): |
| Curriculum (R.I.O.T.):  |
| Instruction (R.I.O.T.): |
| Learner (R.I.O.T.)      |

\*This plan is to be used for students who are identified as strategic or intensive

**2. ANALYZE THE PROBLEM:**

**Points to Consider:** Look at the problem as the difference between what is expected and what occurs. Analyze the problem with respect to the characteristics of the environment, instruction, curriculum, and the individual learner. Other questions may include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is the instruction delivered with fidelity?<br>skills (alterable)?        | <input type="checkbox"/> Is the student missing tool                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How is the information provided during<br>of the learning<br>instruction? | <input type="checkbox"/> What are the characteristics<br>environment? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How is the curriculum organized?<br>past?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> What has not worked in the                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What has worked in the past?  |   |

Based on the data you have collected, why do you think the problem is occurring?

### 3. DEVELOP A PLAN:

Goal:

Write a meaningful, measurable, observable goal. Include the conditions (time frame, materials, setting), student's name, behavior, and criterion.

Identify Potential Interventions:

Generate a list of interventions. Evaluate each one keep in mind the research base and record the top six. Place an asterisk (\*) by the intervention method(s) selected to implement.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment 5

RTI  
Intervention  
Documentation

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_

| Tier | Location | Duration<br>(start /end<br>dates) | Frequency<br>( # days per wk) | Time<br>(min/session) | Intervention<br>(strategy /<br>program) |
|------|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
|      |          |                                   | _____ per wk                  |                       |   |
|      |          |                                   | _____ per wk                  |                       |   |
|      |          |                                   | _____ per wk                  |                       |   |
|      |          |                                   | _____ per wk                  |                       |   |
|      |          |                                   | _____ per wk                  |                       |   |

Team Review Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Meeting should take place every 6 weeks.)

Outcome:

Recommendation:

Additional Diagnostic / Assessment:

\* Please attach DIBELS “Student Progress Monitoring” graph and “Individual Student Profile”.

# Response to Intervention

## Sussex Central High School

*"Whatever it takes to ensure success for all students."*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yPkbhEQifw&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yPkbhEQifw&feature=player_detailpage)

**You too have the power to motivate  
your students to accomplish what  
they never thought possible!**

### **What is RTI?**

“RTI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions. RTI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by child outcome data.”

(NASDSE, 2005)

### Why RTI at the Sussex Central High School?

- No current standardized process for assisting struggling learners at the secondary level
- Ability to provide early interventions in reading and math, thus improving student performance as they progress through SCHS.
- Increased classroom performance because of supports offered during RTI intervention sessions
- Helps to inform the teachers of the instructional needs of the students
- Focuses on the core curriculum and provides supports for struggling learners

### DOE Requirements

- All students at risk at the secondary level will be screened at least three times per year
- Screening for all students shall be regularly spaced throughout the school year
- Screening instruments will be norm referenced or curriculum based
- Progress monitoring instruments must be curriculum based



## Screening

- DCAS
- ELA and Math pass rate
- Teacher developed *common* summative assessments
- District adopted universal reading and math screening
  - Gates-MacGinitie Reading test
  - STAR Math

## 3-Tiered Approach

- Tier I
    - Core curriculum
    - Involves all students
  - Tier II
    - Students who have not been successful in Tier I
    - Group and Individual research based intervention provided by our staff. *minimum 90 minutes per week*
  - Tier III
    - Students who have not been successful in Tier II
    - Sustained intensive interventions. *minimum 150 minutes per week.*
    - Potential Special Education services for students who do not meet success in Tier III
- \*Tier II and III require frequent monitoring to help to gauge progress.**

## Intervention Possibilities

- Tier II and III
  - Read 180
  - Systems 44
  - Cognitive Tutor
  - SCHS Academic Reading and Writing curriculum
  - SCHS Academic Math curriculum

## Programs already in place at SCHS that will support RTI...

- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade academies
- Instructional Support Team
- Positive Behavior Support
- DCAS flexible grouping
- School wide “meet the challenge” grouping
- Title 1 funding
  - Staffing
  - Technology
  - Innovative resources

## Benefits

- Early intervention
- Improved student performance in the classroom and standardized assessments.
- Increased college and career readiness
- Feelings of support from the school

You have what it takes to  
ensure success for all  
students!

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2\\_fDhqRk\\_Ro&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_fDhqRk_Ro&feature=player_detailpage)

## Appendix H

### SELECTING A HIGH SCHOOL MATH INTERVENTION PROGRAM

On average, high school students in the Indian River School District (IRSD) have historically scored above the state average on state assessments in math. Unfortunately, the data indicates that the gap between IRSD and the state on standardized assessments has closed. Table 19 illustrates how the gap has closed from 2011 to 2015 (Delaware Department of Education, 2015). The Delaware state average of students meeting the standard in math on the 11<sup>th</sup> grade 2015 Smarter Balanced assessment was 23%, the IRSD average was 20%. Only 15% of students met or exceeded the designated achievement levels at Sussex Central High School (SCHS) while 26% of students met or exceeded at Indian River High School (IRHS). Thus, over the last five years, IRSD high school students have gone from consistently scoring above the state average in math to falling below the state average.

Table 19 Comparison of IRSD High Schools Performance in Mathematics to State

| Group    | Percent of 10 <sup>th</sup> Graders Meeting DCAS Math Proficiency |           |           |           | Percent of 11 <sup>th</sup> Graders Meeting DE Smarter Balance Proficiency | SAT Quant Scores |
|----------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|------------------|
|          | 2010-2011   | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015  | 2013-2014        |
| Delaware | 59  | 72        | 69        | 68        | 23   | 443              |
| IRSD     | 68  | 77        | 72        | 68        | 20   | 439              |

|             |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>SCHS</b> | 66 | 71 | 69 | 59 | 15 | 420 |
| <b>IRHS</b> | 71 | 85 | 77 | 77 | 26 | 458 |

During the 2014-2015 school year the IRSD focused on selecting a viable math intervention program that could be used to support RTI within the district's secondary schools. The selection process first consisted of an internal review of the current math curricula already in use throughout the district. These included: Khan Academy, Study Island, Math 180 and Perfection Learning. The district was prepared to look externally at intervention curricula if internal curricula were found to be ineffective.

The internal review was a collaborative effort between the Director of Instruction, the Supervisor of Secondary Instruction, the IRSD math specialists and middle and high school principals. They gathered information from program websites, conversations with members of the review committee and conversations with teachers to answer the following questions:

- Is the program aligned to standards?
- Is the program accessible for students?
- What is the cost of the program?
- Who is the target population of the program?
- What is the potential for program usability?

I also reviewed the same programs using six instructional principles tailored for mathematics interventions at the Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 developed by Fuchs (2011).

1. Instructional explicitness. A meta-analysis of 58 math studies (Kroesbergen & Van Luit, 2003) revealed that students with math disability benefit more from explicit instruction than from discovery-

oriented methods. Each of the four potential intervention curricula allow for explicit instruction.

2. Instructional design that eases the learning challenge. Teaching strategies should be precise and instruction should be carefully sequenced to the needs of the student. Math instruction should include foundational skills that can be applied across multiple mathematics applications.
3. A strong conceptual basis for procedures that are taught. Neglect in this area can cause confusion, learning gaps, and a failure to maintain and integrate previously mastered content.
4. An emphasis on drill and practice. Instructional practices should include practice in sorting problems into problem types, the mixing of problem types within the daily lesson, and daily review.
5. Cumulative review as part of drill and practice. There should be a continual review of foundational skills that were taught in introductory units.
6. Motivators to help students regulate their attention and behavior and to work hard. Because students receiving interventions have likely already experienced some level of failure, motivators and/or tangible reinforcements are needed.

Scores were assigned after considering the research cited, a review of the curriculum websites and discussions with district staff.

The results of the two sets of reviews are presented in Table 20 below. Additional descriptive data are reported in Attachment 1 about each program. All four programs were aligned to state standards and were accessible to students. Three of the four had substantial fees, Khan Academy was free. Khan Academy and Perfection Learning were focused primarily on Tier 2 students while the other two either focused on Tier 3 or a combination of Tier 2 and 3 students. They varied in terms of their acceptance by students and/or teachers. Ratings using the Fuch's criteria were

generally high (15-18 out of 18 possible points). Both Khan Academy and Math 180 earned maximum scores.

Table 20 Math Intervention Program Findings

| Criteria                       | Khan Academy   | Study Island  | Math 180  | Perfection Learning                                       |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
|                                | IRSD Program Review Criteria                                   |   |   |   |
| Aligned to standards           | Yes  | Yes   | Yes   | Yes   |
| Accessibility                  | Online   | Online  | Classroom lessons and Online                              | Booklets and Online                                       |
| Cost                           | Free   | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses     | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses | Substantial fees associated with school/district licenses |
| Target Population              | Primarily Tier 2 students                                      | Tier 2 and 3 students   | Primarily Tier 3 students                                 | Primarily Tier 2 students                                 |
| Usability                      | Previous student outcomes and student acceptance were positive | Previous student outcomes and student acceptance were minimal | Proven effective with Tier 3 students                     | Has been successful and was well-received by teachers     |
| Criteria                       | Program Review based on Fuchs' Key Principals                  |   |   |   |
| Instructional explicitness     | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Instructional Design           | 3 (adaptive)   | 2   | 3 (adaptive)  | 2   |
| Conceptual Basis of Procedures | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Drill and Practice             | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Cumulative Review              | 3  | 3   | 3   | 3   |
| Motivators                     | 3 (badges)   | 3 (games)   | 3 (games)   | 1   |

|       |    |    |    |    |
|-------|----|----|----|----|
| Total | 18 | 17 | 18 | 15 |
|-------|----|----|----|----|

Note: Ratings on Fuch’s key principles can range from a high of 3 (meets the ideals of the principle) to a low of 1 (does not meet the ideals of the principle).

The district team determined that Khan Academy was the best choice for Tier 2 interventions because the program is aligned to state and national standards, is easily accessible via electronic device, is free, and is able to meet the needs of the students. The math specialists indicated that the primary reasons for the selection of Khan were the lack of program fees and adaptability of the program for students. She noted that Khan is continuously updated and has become more aligned with Common Core State Standards. District instructional specialists agree that the more specific needs of the Tier 3 students should be addressed with the Math 180 intervention curriculum. The team also noted that Math 180 provided teachers with helpful information related to students’ progress. According to IRSD staff, reports can be used to support RTI decisions for individual students. In addition, the district’s math specialist was pleased with the ability to set up the program for individual students. Moreover, the Khan Academy program is web based and can be accessed through the various devices used within the district.

The district’s decision to use Khan Academy as its Tier 2 math intervention curriculum is supported by both sets of reviews. The district’s review indicates that Khan Academy is aligned to standards, is available online, is free and has had a positive usability response. Likewise, when considering ratings associated with Fuchs’ key principles, Khan Academy scored a maximum of 3 in each of the six categories for an overall score of 18. Although Math 180 also scored maximum points, there is a significant cost associated with this program. Thus Khan Academy is the preferred choice for a secondary math RTI intervention curriculum for the IRSD.



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## Attachment 1

### Khan Academy

According to the Khan Academy website (<https://www.khanacademy.org>), the free program offers practice exercises, instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard. The IRSD math specialist, who spent several days reviewing the online system, noted that the program consists of math “missions” that are aligned to standards covering particular grade levels or subjects. The Khan website defines missions as “personalized math experiences in which students can learn at their own pace, master skills that are challenging and appropriate for their level, and use hints and videos to learn and review” (Khan, 2016). The IRSD math specialist further shared that once a skill is mastered, through the completion of a “Mastery challenge,” students can move on to another mission. Through the Mastery system, the Khan program will personalize a student’s learning experience so concepts are recycled to help with review and to enhance learning.

Khan Academy has been in use for three years in various capacities within the IRSD, but has not been officially endorsed as the curriculum of choice for RTI interventions. Math teachers have been using the program to support classroom instruction. As a principal of a school where math teachers used Khan Academy to support their lessons, I can attest that the program was well-received by both the teachers and the students. The teachers noted that the students connected with the program because of the online capabilities and the step by step instructions of the lessons.

A recent study, conducted by SRI Education’s Center for Technology in Learning (Murphy, Gallagher, Krumm, Mislevy, & Hafter 2014), evaluated the implementation of Khan Academy resources and tools in 20 schools during the 2011-

12 and 2012-13 school years. Although the study did not explicitly focus on the ability of the program to impact students' academic performance, it did provide insight into the capabilities of the program. The study found that Khan academy can be used to facilitate self-directed learning, support teacher-led whole-class instruction, and assist small-group instruction. Other findings included:

- 71% of students reported that they enjoyed using Khan Academy.
- 45% of students surveyed said that Khan Academy allowed them to learn new things about math on their own without the help of a teacher.
- About 80% of teachers reported that Khan Academy increased their ability to monitor students' knowledge and ability.
- 91% of teachers indicated that using Khan Academy increased their ability to provide students with opportunities to practice new concepts and skills they had recently learned in class.

According to the study, classroom observations revealed that that student engagement was generally high during Khan Academy work sessions. "Evidence from exploratory analyses of data available from two sites suggested that students who spent more time on Khan Academy and successfully completed more Khan Academy problem sets to proficiency, experienced more positive than expected outcomes in terms of math test scores, reduced math anxiety, and had higher confidence in their ability to do math" (Murphy et al., 2014, p. 12). According to the researchers, teachers reported that one of the most useful aspects of Khan Academy was the rapid feedback that is provided to students.

The researchers did uncover some challenges with the implementation of the Khan Academy program. Teachers reported that Khan was not always aligned with their core math curriculum. This created difficulty for teachers attempting to supplement with Khan Academy. Teachers also reported that some of the content was

difficult to access relevant videos and problem sets. The researchers did note that Khan updated their program during the two year study and after. Thus, much of the challenges have been addressed through updates and redesigns.

In addition, during the summer 2014, the Silicon Valley Research Alliance and Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL-West) collaborated to conducted a randomized controlled trial to determine the impact of the Elevate summer math program on entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. One hour during each of the 19 days of the summer program was devoted to student online use of Khan Academy. Results of the study revealed an increase in student scores by 4 points on the Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project's Readiness test. Additionally, estimated algebra readiness increased from 12 percent to 29 percent. The Elevate math program did have a positive impact on student performance and students spent a quarter of each day participating in the Khan Academy program (Snipes, Huang, Jaquet, & Finkelstein 2015).

#### Study Island

According to the Study Island website ([www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com)) the program is designed to help students master content specified in state and Common Core standards. The website also indicates that the web-based interactive lessons and activities can either be self-paced, or under the guidance of a teacher (Study Island, 2015). According to the district's Math Specialist, Study Island was not widely used across the district because it is less engaging to students than Khan Academy. She made this determination by monitoring the implementation of the program and through informal conversations with the teachers. The usability of the program thus suffered because many students had little interests in the program. Additionally, she

noted that the system must be managed manually. The teachers are responsible for making the appropriate updates after frequent monitoring. Other programs reviewed update automatically.

Through his dissertation work, Thomas Viviano (2011) researched the impact of the Study Island software on students when integrated into the academics at a part-time suburban Career and Technical Center (CTC) in Pennsylvania that serves students in grades 10-12. Viviano's study attempted to investigate if Study Island software helps students achieve proficiency scores on the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA), the 4Sight Math and Reading Assessments and the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) end-of-program technical assessments.

Results of the study showed that the Study Island program:

- Had little to no impact on students' 4Sight assessment results for all students and some impact on students with IEPs.
- Had little to no impact on students' PSSA results for all students and some impact on students with IEPs.
- Had little to no impact on students' NOCTI assessment results for all students and students with IEPs.

When considering the results of his survey and the cost of the Study Island program, Viviano acknowledged that it might be well advised to fund initiatives that may better impact the Career and Technical Education Curriculum. (Viviano 2011).

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) (2014) conducted an online review of the Study Island assessment materials associated with Common Core Math, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Study Island received passing marks for their *Focus on Major Work*, but failed to receive passing marks in the area of *Alignment to*

*Test Items*. According to the scoring rubric, *Alignment to Test Items* is a non-negotiable area of the rubric. The evaluators indicated that the score was received because not all test items were linked to standards. The evaluators also suggest that some standards were not assigned to the appropriate high school courses.

### Math 180

The Math 180 website [www.hmhco.com/Math180](http://www.hmhco.com/Math180) indicates that the program is designed to address the needs of struggling students in grades 6 and up through the understanding of concepts necessary to master algebra and advanced mathematics. Math 180 teachers can use the program within a whole group or allow students to work individually through the software. According to the website, the software adapts to the students' needs, thus creating a personalized lesson (Math 180, 2016). According to the district's instructional leaders, the Math 180 program has been an intervention curriculum within the district for many years and has primarily served special education students who require the greatest level of support. They noted that the lessons consist of a small group teacher guided session and a computer session. The district's math specialist indicated that the program is best suited for Tier 3 students. The Director of Special Education shared that the program is quite costly and that, in order to best implement the program, continual professional development for the teachers is necessary. Currently, there is a select group of teachers who have been trained to implement the Math 180 program. With these factors in mind, the team felt that the Math 180 program was too costly to be used as a Tier 2 intervention program. The program will however continue to be used as a curriculum for select Tier 3 students. I was unable to locate any empirical research associated with the Math 180 curriculum.

## Perfection Learning

According to the Perfection Learning website, [www.perfectionlearning.com](http://www.perfectionlearning.com), the math program is a comprehensive program that builds conceptual understanding and mathematical fluency through print and digital instruction, practice, and assessment. The IRSD math specialist indicated that the program has previously been used to enhance Tier 2 interventions when there were not enough devices to support online programs. She noted that although the program has been well received by teachers and district leaders, there is a substantial cost associated with the program. Because of the significant cost, the district does not recommend this program for future use. This curriculum was purchased specifically for interventions.

The Louisiana Department of Education's (2015) review of the Perfection Learning curriculum determined that the Perfection Learning math curriculum the LDOE gave Perfection Learning an overall Tier 3 rating, which means it is not representing quality according to their rating system. As indicated by the evaluators, the program did not focus on the major work of the grade, which was a non-negotiable for a score at the Tier 1 or Tier 2 level. The rubric indicates that materials should devote a large majority of class time to the major work of each grade/course. More specifically, the evaluators noted within their rubric that time is spent on standards that are not aligned to the identified concepts and significant time is spent on work from prior grades. The LDOE did determine that Perfection Learning was strong when considering consistent, coherent content, and program rigor and balance.

## **Appendix I**

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

This artifact provides an overview of my research and development of an RTI policy for the Indian River School District (IRSD). An RTI policy is an important way to provide direction to schools as they work to address the needs of all students within the IRSD.

IRSD, a comprehensive public school system in Sussex County Delaware, has developed Response to Intervention (RTI) programs for secondary schools. Section 12 of Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code indicates that each public agency shall establish and implement procedures to determine whether a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions for reading and mathematics. In order for students to meet their maximum potential, fidelity to the core curriculum, interventions and progress monitoring must be in place. Additionally, with the integration of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), all staff must work to assist all students as they strive to meet the greater expectations of these standards. RTI is a way for schools to screen students' level of understanding in English and Math, while also providing interventions for those students who are found to be at risk of not meeting standardized levels of proficiency.

#### **Policy Importance**

There has been growing concern among members of the IRSD office of Accountability and the office of Instructions surrounding fidelity to the tenets of RTI.



Because there is no district policy driving the planning for RTI, interventions for struggling students are left primarily to the discretion of the school and each classroom teacher within the district's three middle schools and two high schools. When students are brought to the attention of the school's instructional support team (IST), after poor classroom performance, the level of interventions provided varies greatly depending on the school and the members of the IST team. No current standardized program, or approach, is available for IRSD secondary schools. A standardized approach for identifying and assisting struggling learners will not only help to ensure that students are receiving adequate supports through the school's RTI program, but will also help district office personnel provide RTI support and professional development. Currently, district support is greatly individualized for the schools because the RTI programs, although structured with the basic foundations of RTI in mind, are using varying intervention curricula and master schedules.

Recent formal evaluations of the fidelity of RTI implementation within the IRSD secondary schools have confirmed that, although an RTI framework is in place at each school, the programs vary greatly (Owens, 2015). Some glaring differences include:

- Non uniform RTI curricula and screeners.
- Differing amounts of time associated with intervention periods.
- Inconsistent master schedules used to support the RTI framework.
- Varying opportunities for enrichment.

Recommendations addressing these areas of concern have been provided to the schools and district office and school personnel are in the process of addressing their respective needs.

Implementation of programs such as RTI in a consistent manner across all district schools is difficult to achieve without the backing of a district-wide policy. Such a policy does not currently exist. Student instructional needs are addressed in the district's Curriculum Development Policy within the Instruction portion of the policy manual. Specifically, IRSD policy IF (Curriculum Development) states, "It is the responsibility of the Board of Education, through the use of its professional staff, to make sure that curriculum is as up to date, as flexible, and as responsive to the needs of the students as is possible." RTI is not specifically mentioned. The complete IF Curriculum Development policy can be found in Attachment 1. A policy that provides a clear statement regarding the philosophy of providing interventions for all students, as well as a description of the components of a systemic process for addressing student needs, would facilitate holding district secondary schools accountable for the implementation of an RTI system.

### **Search for Sample Policies**

To inform the creation of such a policy, I searched for examples at both the state and local levels. In Delaware, both Title 14 of the code and the Delaware Department of Education's interpretation of the code help drive RTI procedures within the local Delaware districts. I also explored how other states have implemented RTI to identify established RTI-related policies which they used to drive local district policies. To conduct my search, I used the University of Delaware's online library. A search of the Academic One File database using the keywords "RTI, ""state," and "law" produced 10 articles. Two of the articles were very helpful with developing an understanding of state laws and guidelines. Ziekkel (2011) found that 23 states specify an individual written plan as part of RTI implementation. Many states, including

Delaware, require the use of RTI when determining Special Education classification (Bocala, Mello, Reedy, and Lacireno-Paquet, 2009). However, specific policies that would guide IRSD's implementation were not found at the state level.

I next focused my search on policies at the district level. I looked at other districts in Delaware as well as across the country. I reviewed the online policy manuals, when available, for each of the 19 school districts within Delaware. Websites and subsequent policy manuals were accessed through the Delaware Department of Education's District Profile page. Although some districts had RTI information available, I was unable to locate any policies specifically outlining RTI expectations. I next conducted an internet search in order to locate RTI policies from districts outside Delaware that may be used as samples. The search consisted of a basic Google search with the keywords "RTI," "State" and "Policy."

This search resulted in the identification of five policies that were aligned with Delaware and the Indian River School District's RTI framework.

1. Caldwell School District (Caldwell, ID)- Attachment 2
2. Longview School District (Longview, WA)- Attachment 3
3. City School District of New Rochelle (New Rochelle, NY)- Attachment 4
4. Cape Flattery School District (Sekiu, WA)- Attachment 5
5. New Hartford Central School District (New Hartford, NY)- Attachment 6

Each of the policies reviewed contained important features that helped guide the development of the proposed IRSD RTI policy. All of the reviewed policies contained many of the same elements, but were simply organized in slightly different ways. I was specifically interested in the following elements: a philosophy statement,

a needs statement, a description of the RTI processes and a parent communication statement. These four elements are both key to effectively articulating the need for a policy and to outlining the primary components of RTI. Although each of the reviewed policies may have not contained all of the elements that I felt were important to an IRSD RTI policy, they each contained important features that will help to guide policy development. I was not concerned with locating the “perfect” policy, but rather with uncovering elements from policies that could be combined to create a clear and effective policy for IRSD. Table 21 summarizes the key elements included in each district policy.<sup>1</sup>

Table 21 Components of RTI policies reviewed

| District                             | Philosophy Statement | Need Statement | RTI Process Description | Parent Notification |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Caldwell School District             | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| Longview School District             | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| City School District of New Rochelle | ✓                    | ✓              | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| Cape Flattery School District        | ✓                    |                | ✓                       | ✓                   |
| New Hartford Central School District |                      | ✓              | ✓                       |                     |

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<sup>1</sup> The reviewed policies include section headings, which have been added to help with the identification of the various components of the respective policies.

### **Philosophy Statement**

Four of the five sample policies begin with a district philosophy statement. The philosophy statement highlights the district's mission as it relates to student access to a quality RTI program. The philosophy statement allows the reader to better understand the district's view on providing supports for students. For instance, Longview School District states: "It is the district's policy to ensure that all students receive high quality, scientific, research-based general education core instruction and, as appropriate, strategic and intensive intervention supports matched to student needs." (Longview School District, 2015). RTI policies for Cape Flattery School District and Caldwell School District contain philosophy statements that nearly mirror Longview's statement. The IRSD philosophy statement should articulate the overall purpose for the policy and how the policy is aligned with the district's mission.

### **Need Statement**

After the opening philosophy statement, two of the policies identify the need for a structured process for achieving the district's RTI goals. The need statement helps to develop a sense of urgency related to the need for intervention support. The City School District of New Rochelle's need statement reads: "RtI represents an important educational strategy to close achievement gaps for all students, including students at risk, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps. It has also been shown to lead to more appropriate identification of and interventions for students with learning disabilities." (The City School District of New Rochelle, 2015). The three policies that did not include a need statement did have a strong philosophy statement that outlined the district's stance on the importance and need for a policy. Because the

need statement directly aligns with the philosophy statement, I will incorporate only a philosophy statement within the IRSD policy.

### **RTI Process**

Following the philosophy and/or the need statement, the policies typically make the first reference to RTI as the process by which the district's philosophy may be accomplished. Each of the five policies chosen as samples include the RTI process for their respective districts. The level of detail associated with the tiered system varied among the sample policies; however the primary components of the framework are clear in each of the five policies. Within the sample policies, the process section outlines the three-tiered system that is synonymous with RTI. The Cape Flattery School District outlines the RTI process within their policy in the following way: "The district's process identifies students' challenges early and provides appropriate instruction by ensuring students are successful in the general education classroom. In implementing the RTI process, the district shall apply..." (Cape Flattery School District, 2015). Cape Flattery, like each of the sample policies highlighted, provides details related to how RTI will be implemented within its schools. The City School District of New Rochelle went into much greater detail with procedures associated with their program. This district also outlined procedures for the use of the policy to assist with the eligibility determination of students with special education needs and professional development practices to support RTI. Historically, in IRSD, this level of detail is outlined within the administrative procedural manual, not the policy manual. Thus, detail of every aspect of the RTI process is not recommended for inclusion within the IRSD RTI policy.

## **Parent Notification**

Four of the five district policies reviewed contained a statement related to the notification of a parent when a student is enrolled into the RTI program. This statement is important because parents should be fully informed of the RTI processes and programs so they may be of assistance if necessary. Because Tier 1 of RTI is considered the general education curriculum, parent notification is not typically needed until students enter Tier 2 or Tier 3. The City School District of New Rochelle articulates its parent notification portion of their RTI policy in the following way: “Parents of all students should be notified of school-wide screening results. In addition, parents of students who are identified as at-risk and who will be provided supplemental intervention must receive written notification, consistent with section 100.2(ii)(vi) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education which includes the:

- Amount and nature of data that will be used to monitor a student’s progress;
- Strategies to increase the student’s rate of learning; and Parent’s right to refer the student for special education services.” (City School District of New Rochelle, 2015)

A portion of the IRSD Mission references a partnership with parents. Additionally, a primary goal within the 2014-2015 IRSD Balanced Score Card is to develop a culture of data-driven decision making and accountability that fosters stakeholder collaboration. In light of these district objectives, a parent notification statement should be included within the IRSD RTI policy.

## **IRSD Policy Structure**

I compared existing language in the IRSD policy manual to the five sample district policies to identify strengths and weaknesses of our current policy structure. In

most cases, the IRSD policies begin with a philosophy statement, much like the sample RTI policies reviewed. For instance, the IRSD Curriculum Development policy opens with the statement:

Curriculum is the foundation of any educational system. It is the responsibility of the Board of Education, through the use of its professional staff, to make sure that curriculum is as up to date, as flexible, and as responsive to the needs of the students as is possible. To that end, the Indian River School District will view changes in teaching methods, teaching materials, and subject matter as part of the ever-changing process of curriculum development. (Curriculum Development policy IF, 2015, page number).

Some policies are then followed by a set of procedures. Interestingly, there are policies within the Instruction section of the policy manual that are simply a paragraph with little or no procedural clarity. Another policy within the “Instruction” section of the IRSD policy manual that most closely aligns, structurally, to the sample RTI policies is IRSD policy IKA, Grading Systems. Although the structure of the policy does not align specifically, to all of the sample policies, it does share many of the characteristics and may be used as a framework for the development of an IRSD RTI policy. This policy can be found in attachment 7. The policy provides a philosophy statement and specific expectations associated with district grading. The philosophy statement reads:

The Indian River School District’s grading system is designed to evaluate a student’s academic progress and to effectively convey this information to students, parents, and other appropriate parties. Grades are to be used to measure the progress of



a student in relation to instructional objectives/standards and other requirements of a course or area of study.” (IRSD policy IKA, Grading Systems, 2015, 1)

### **Policy Development**

The development of an RTI policy is intended to provide a clear understanding of why RTI is important and to outline a framework by which school-level programs should be developed. Through my RTI evaluative work within the district, it has become evident that IRSD secondary schools are devoting a great deal of time and energy around the development of their RTI programs. Unfortunately, the district schools are sometimes misguided in their efforts. A well-defined policy will help to guide the leaders of their school as they work to include RTI into their very complex organizations.

After considering the five sample RTI policies and the structure of the many IRSD policies, I worked to develop a policy for the IRSD that would clearly articulate the foundations of the district’s RTI program. I wanted to develop a policy that both incorporated the primary elements of RTI while also aligning to the current structure of existing IRSD policies. The structure of the IRSD Curriculum and Grading policy, along with the sample policies were used to inform the development of the proposed RTI policy.<sup>2</sup> Current policies within the IRSD take on various forms. Some, like the School Choice policy, strongly resemble the Delaware Code and specifically outline the various steps that will need to be taken in order to adhere to the guidelines of the

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<sup>2</sup> The IRSD policy committee is in the process of conducting a systematic review of all policies. The district hopes to develop a calendar by which all policies will be formally reviewed and potentially revised every three years.

policy, while others are broader and allow the Administrative Procedures Manual to outline the more detailed aspects of the policy. After consulting with the policy committee, I elected to develop a policy that is broader so as to allow the details of the IRSD RTI system to be outlined within the district's administrative manual. The opening paragraph of the policy provides a philosophy statement.

The Indian River School District believes that all students should be provided high quality, scientific, research-based general education instruction and when needed, additional services and interventions at increasing levels of intensity aligned with the student's need should be in place. The district recognizes the core components of Response to Intervention (RTI) as a valuable process.

The philosophy statement is a combination of the philosophy and need statements that were found in the sample policies. I used the phrase "increasing levels of intensity," which was used by Caldwell School District. I believe that this statement best articulated the process of continual modifications of the program in order to best meet the needs of the student. This opening statement frames the importance of the policy. The final sentence within the philosophy statement helps the reader to transition from why the policy is important to the specific process of RTI.

The second paragraph outlines the district's description of the RTI program and includes Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code. Code and regulation information is also found within some of the sample policies and within existing IRSD policies. The code adds to the breadth of the policy.

In accordance with RTI guidance from the Delaware Department of education and Section 12 of Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code, the district shall establish RTI as a District-wide system of providing high quality, researched based instructional interventions to meet the diverse needs of all learners. The district shall follow the established three-tiered RTI model.

Much like the policies reviewed, and similar to existing IRSD policies, the next several paragraphs of the proposed RTI policy detail the basic components of the three-tiered RTI system. The language associated with each tier is taken directly from Delaware code.

The final paragraph of the policy, again much like the sample policies, is information related to informing parents of the program and interventions.

The school shall inform parents of interventions used to address the identified needs of students who will transition to Tier 2 or Tier 3 of the school's RTI program including strategies used to increase the student's rate of learning.

The completed proposed policy can be found in attachment 8.<sup>3</sup>

After reviewing the proposed policy with members of the IRSD Department of Instruction, I set up a meeting with Superintendent Dr. Susan Bunting to review the proposed policy and to explain why I thought the policy was needed. After discussion regarding the importance of the policy, she agreed that there was indeed a need for the policy. We further discussed whether the policy could fit into an existing IRSD policy, or whether the policy should stand-alone. Dr. Bunting agreed that the policy was too important to imbed within an existing policy. Thus, it was decided that the proposal should be submitted to the policy committee as a stand-alone policy. The policy has been approved by the Superintendent for submission to the policy committee.

Typically, the policy committee will review the policy twice, request needed revisions and submit to the full board for final approval. The first reading of the proposed policy occurred during the April 2016 IRSD policy committee meeting. During this meeting I

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<sup>3</sup> The proposed IRSD policy includes section headings to help with the identification of the various components of the policy.

reviewed the proposed policy and articulated the importance of an IRSD RTI policy. The proposed policy was accepted with revisions to the procedural section of the document. The revised policy was ultimately approved by the board in May 2016.

### **Closing**

An RTI policy is an essential way to provide guidance to schools as they work to address the needs of all students within the IRSD. Not only does a policy help to solidify the standard operating procedures within schools, but it helps the district office personnel develop quality focused professional development that support teachers. RTI fidelity evaluations have highlighted the tremendous progress that has been made in the last two years with IRSD Secondary RTI programs. Unfortunately, it has also uncovered the fact that many inconsistencies still exist. A clear RTI policy will benefit all stakeholders, most importantly the students of IRSD who will have the advantage of receiving consistent and supported RTI practices within their schools.

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## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum is the foundation of any educational system. It is the responsibility of the Board of Education, through the use of its professional staff, to make sure that curriculum is as up to date, as flexible, and as responsive to the needs of the students as is possible. To that end, the Indian River School District will view changes in teaching methods, teaching materials, and subject matter as part of the ever-changing process of curriculum development.

The district will establish a curriculum cycle which shall cause each educational discipline to be reviewed on a periodic basis for the purpose of making necessary changes in that discipline.

In addition, the administrative staff shall develop regulations governing procedures for the approval of curriculum changes. Such regulations shall allow for the expression of desired changes by all professional staff and the Board of Education and shall call for an orderly, thorough and consistent review of those changes at appropriate administrative levels. Major discipline changes deemed necessary because of the curriculum review cycle shall require board approval before adoption. Board approval for all other curriculum changes shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Adopted 11/28/89

POLICY TITLE: Response To Intervention (RTI) POLICY NO: 671

**Philosophy Statement**

It is our district's policy to provide all students with high quality, scientific, research-based general education core instruction and as appropriate, additional services and interventions at increasing levels of intensity matched to student needs.

**RTI Process Description**

The district utilizes the essential components of the Response To Intervention (RTI) process which combines systematic assessment, decision making and a multi-tiered approach to providing instruction in order to prevent failure and maximize the effectiveness of educational curriculum and instruction for all students. To achieve improved student outcomes, the district will use a RTI process that will identify students' challenges early and provide appropriate instruction in the general education classroom. In implementing the process, the district will utilize:

1. Caldwell School District #132's RTI Guidance Document;
2. Scientific, research-based interventions in the general education setting to the extent possible;
3. Measurement of the student's response to intervention; and
4. Data to inform instruction.

Procedures to implement student interventions using the RTI process shall be developed and phased in beginning with the 2011 – 2012 school year and fully implemented by school year



2013 – 2014. Teacher observations, and classroom, school, district, and state assessments may be used to identify students who are at risk of academic or behavior problems and thereby in need of scientific research based interventions to the extent possible.

Intervention shall consist of three levels that increase in intensity:

1. The general education core curriculum and classroom instructional design with benchmark assessments for screening;
2. Targeted instruction, which may include more time, smaller groups, and/or extended curriculum in addition to the core curriculum along with regular monitoring of progress; and when appropriate, an individualized learning plan (I-Plan);
3. Intensive, strategic instruction, which may include explicit, systematic curricula, very small groups, or accelerated curriculum. Students' progress will be closely monitored.

### **Parent Notification**

The District shall inform parents regarding use of scientific, research-based interventions, including the State's and District policies regarding the amount and nature of students' performance data collected and the general education services provided; strategies used to increase the student's rate of learning; and the parent right to request a special education evaluation. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to delay an appropriate evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability.

Longview School District  
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

**Philosophy Statement**

It is the district's policy to ensure that all students receive high quality, scientific, research-based general education core instruction and, as appropriate, strategic and intensive intervention supports matched to student needs.

**RTI Process Description**

At the discretion of the superintendent, the district may utilize the core principles of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process which combines systematic assessment, decision-making and a multi-tiered services delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students.

When the RTI process is utilized, students' challenges are identified and appropriate instruction and interventions are used first in the general education setting. When the district utilizes the RTI process, the district shall apply:

- A. Scientific, research-based interventions in the general education setting;
- B. Measure the student's response to intervention; and
- C. Use RTI data to inform instruction.

The superintendent shall develop procedures for implementation of the RTI process as appropriate. In determining when and how the RTI method will be implemented, the superintendent shall consider teacher observations, and use classroom, school and/or district assessments. When students who are at risk of academic or behavioral problems, and potentially in need of scientific research-based

interventions, are identified, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee will determine whether and how the RTI method should be used.

When RTI is in use, intervention shall consist of three levels of assistance that increase in intensity. The three levels shall include:

- A. Screening and classroom interventions;
- B. Targeted small group intervention; and
- C. Intensive interventions

### **Parent Notification**

#### Parent Involvement in the RTI Process

The district shall inform parents regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions as required by State and federal law.

#### Management Resources:

Policy News, December 2007 Response to Intervention (RTI)

Initially Adopted: February 25, 2008

Adopted: December 14, 2009

City School District of New Rochelle  
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION 5175

**Philosophy Statement**

In accordance with the Response to Intervention Guidance for New York State School Districts (October 2010), the Board of Education of the City School District of New Rochelle establishes Response to Intervention (RtI) as a District-wide system of providing high quality, research-based instructional and behavior interventions to meet the diverse needs of all learners. RtI is delivered to all students in the general education setting by qualified personnel. According to the NYS Guidance for Response to Intervention (2010):

**Need Statement**

“RtI represents an important educational strategy to close achievement gaps for all students, including students at risk, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps. It has also been shown to lead to more appropriate identification of and interventions for students with learning disabilities” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, pg.1)

**RTI Process Description**

An effective RtI model is designed to improve outcomes for all students. The following are the basic components of the RtI process:

- All students (K-12) will receive scientific, research-based, differentiated core instruction in reading and mathematics.
  - Reading instruction in K-5 must include “explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension”;

- Mathematics instruction in K-5 includes instruction in problem-solving, arithmetic skill and fluency, conceptual knowledge/number sense and reasoning ability;
- The core reading program in K-5 must be scheduled for an uninterrupted 90- minute block of instruction daily;
- Universal screening will be conducted three times each academic year (fall, winter, spring) to identify students who are not making academic progress at the expected rate;
- RtI is a three-tiered approach. Students will receive research-based interventions matched to their targeted needs.
  - Tier 1 is the core differentiated instructional and behavior program provided to all students by the general education teacher in the general education classroom.
  - Tier 2 intervention is small group supplemental instruction for 10-15% of the students who are not adequately responding to Tier 1 instruction. This supplemental intervention is provided in addition to, and not in place of, the Tier 1 core instruction.
  - Tier 3 is more intensive instruction provided to students who are not adequately responding to instruction in Tiers 1 and 2. Like Tier 2, Tier 3 instruction is provided in addition to, and not in place of, the core instruction provided in the general education classroom.
- Repeated assessments, known as progress monitoring, utilizing curriculum-based measurements (CBMs) will take place to determine whether the student is responding to the research-based instructional strategies and interventions, and is making progress towards age- or grade-level standards. “When monitoring the progress of LEP/ELL students, ‘the expected rate of progress takes into account linguistic considerations such as the student’s [native and second] language proficiency, stage of second language acquisition, [and] type of language instruction. The student’s progress [is compared with] levels demonstrated by peers from comparable cultural, linguistic, and experiential backgrounds who have received the intervention.’ (Garcia & Ortiz, 2008)” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York School Districts, October, 2010, pg. 21-22).

- “An RtI implementation plan should include strategies for evaluation of implementation fidelity and effectiveness of the model from initial steps forward. Strategies should include both annual summative evaluations to describe progress over the year and formative evaluation during each year to all adjustment to the RtI process if it becomes apparent that elements of the model are not being implemented accurately or are not having the desired impact.” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October, 2010, pg. 44).
- Each school will establish a building-wide instruction and behavior support team that will establish at-risk criteria, review screening data, and make decisions related to student performance and interventions. Culturally-responsive instruction will be provided that takes into account cultural knowledge, experiences, learning styles of students from diverse backgrounds. Multicultural information, resources and materials will be used in the classroom.

### **Parent Notification**

- “Parents of all students should be notified of school-wide screening results. In addition, parents of students who are identified as at-risk and who will be provided supplemental intervention must receive written notification, consistent with section 100.2(ii)(vi) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education which includes the:
  - Amount and nature of data that will be used to monitor a student’s progress;
  - Strategies to increase the student’s rate of learning; and
  - Parent’s right to refer the student for special education services.” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, pg. 10)

### **Structure of Response to Intervention Program:**

District Level: The City School District of New Rochelle will establish a District-wide Steering Committee comprised of administrators, board members, parents, general and special education teaching and support staff. This committee will establish guidelines for RtI implementation and will support building level data and problem solving teams.

School Building Level: Each school will establish a data inquiry team led by the Principal. That team will convene to conduct the following tasks:

- Review and analyze the data collected pursuant to this policy;
- Monitor school-wide benchmark data.

Each school will also establish an instructional and behavior problem-solving team that may comprise of any or all of the following: general education teachers, specialists such as the special education, reading, gifted coordinator, speech and language and ELL teachers, psychologist, and a building administrator. The team will convene to conduct the following tasks:

- Recommend changes in students' instructional programs based upon the analysis of the data;
- Make decisions regarding the appropriateness of the interventions implemented;
- Determine whether the intervention provided is research-based and is being implemented with fidelity consistent with the targeted area of need. Determine when and if a student is not making progress should be referred to the CSE.

Tiers of Intervention:

“When students are identified through screening, progress monitoring or other on-going assessment procedures as not making sufficient or satisfactory progress, the school's multi-tier service delivery model provides a range of supplemental instructional interventions with increasing levels of intensity to address these needs.

The various tiers include distinguishing features such as:

- Size of instructional group,
- Mastery requirements for content,
- Frequency and focus of screening,

Duration of the intervention,  
Frequency and focus of progress monitoring,  
Frequency of intervention provided, and  
The instructor's qualifications." (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, p. 12)

Tier 1: All students receive core curriculum and differentiated research-based instruction in reading and mathematics in the general education classroom provided by the general education teacher. Students in grades K-5 will receive explicit, systematic and research-based instruction in reading in a daily uninterrupted 90-minute block of instruction and mathematics. Students' progress is benchmarked three times per year. Students who are initially identified as at-risk on the universal screening may receive Tier 1 intervention and will be progress monitored for 5-6 weeks.

Tier 2: Students who fail to demonstrate adequate progress in reading and/or math as determined by benchmark data will be provided additional targeted supplementary interventions in addition to the core curriculum. Determination of which intervention will be provided is decided by the problem-solving process or by standard protocol treatment procedures. The targeted interventions are provided at a minimum three (3) times weekly for 30 minutes in a small group. Intervention results are progress monitored on a consistent basis but not less than every two (2) weeks. The recommended length of time that a student receives a tier 2 intervention will vary from nine (9) to thirty (30) weeks depending on the student's progress. Data results shall be documented and lead to the termination or continuation of the intervention including extension of the duration of the intervention at that tier or movement to a more intensive instructional approach. Students who display behaviors that interfere



with academic progress will be provided with behavior intervention support, counseling, or social skill training. Behavior intervention data will be monitored on a consistent basis.

Tier 3: Students who fail to make adequate progress based on 6-8 data points as determined from progress monitoring for 6-10 weeks of Tier 2 intervention shall be provided with a Tier 3 intervention in addition to the core instruction. Tier 3 provides the student with more intensive, individualized intervention at least four (4) times a week for 30 to 60 minutes. Progress monitoring takes place at least once a week. Based on the review of data, the Building Level Team shall determine whether a Tier 3 student is making adequate progress to meet grade level standards. If the student does not make adequate progress despite implementation of a minimum of three (3) research based interventions in Tier 2 and 3, the team will consult with the Principal to consider a referral to the CSE. Upon the recommendation of the Principal that the student should be referred to the CSE, the team will initiate a referral without delay.

#### Professional staff development

Staff assigned to provide students with research based reading and math interventions shall receive training on the specific intervention techniques and fidelity of implementation as well as assessment administration, data collection and visual charting of progress monitoring data. In addition, the “school district shall take appropriate steps to ensure that staff has the knowledge and skills necessary to implement a response to intervention program” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, Appendix pg. 2).

#### Use of RtI in Determination of a Learning Disability

“Effective on and after July 1, 2012, a school district must have an RtI process in place as it may no longer use the severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability to determine that a student in kindergarten through grade four has a learning disability in the area of reading.

In making a determination of eligibility for special education, the CSE must determine that underachievement of the student is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading (including the five essential components), mathematics or limited English proficiency. The data from RtI can help to document that the reason for a student’s poor performance or underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction or limited English proficiency. Along with other individual evaluation information, RtI data can yield important descriptive information about how children learn and why they may be having difficulties.

When determining if a student has a learning disability, the data from multiple sources indicates that the student, when provided appropriate instruction:

1. Does not adequately achieve grade level standards in the areas of reading and/or mathematics;
2. (a) is not making sufficient progress toward meeting those standards when provided with appropriate instruction consistent with an RtI model;  
  
or  
  
(b) exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance and/or achievement relative to age or grade level standards as found relevant by the CSE;  
  
and
3. has learning difficulties that are not primarily the result of a visual, hearing or motor disability; mental retardation; emotional disturbance, cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited

English proficiency.” (Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, pg. 45)

Policy CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF

Adopted: Res. No. 12-276 – Apr. 3, 2012 NEW ROCHELLE

New Rochelle, New York

Cape Flattery School District  
Board Policy  
BP 2163  
Instruction  
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

**Philosophy Statement**

It is the district's policy to ensure that all students receive high quality, scientific, research-based general education core instruction and, as appropriate, strategic and intensive intervention supports matched to student needs. The district utilizes the core principles of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process which combines systematic assessment, decision-making and a multi-tiered services delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students.

**RTI Process Description**

The district's process identifies students' challenges early and provides appropriate instruction by ensuring students are successful in the general education classroom. In implementing the RTI process, the district shall apply:

A. Scientific, research-based interventions in the general education setting;

1. Measure the student's response to intervention; and
2. Use RTI data to inform instruction.

The superintendent shall develop procedures to implement student interventions; and use teacher observations, and classroom, school, or district assessments to identify students who are at risk of academic or behavioral problems and thereby in need of scientific research-based interventions.

Intervention shall consist of a three levels of assistance that increase in intensity. The three levels shall include:

- Screening and classroom interventions;

- Targeted small group intervention; and
- Intensive interventions

### **Parent Notification**

#### **Parent Involvement in the RTI Process**

The district shall inform parents regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions, including: a) the state's policies regarding the amount and nature of students' performance data collected and the general education services provided; b) strategies used to increase the student's rate of learning; c) and the parents' right to request a special education evaluation.

Adoption Date: April 22, 2008

Cape Flattery School District # 401

## Attachment 6

### Policy

#### INSTRUCTION 7308

#### Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework

### **Need Statement**

In accordance with the regulations of the Commissioner of Education, The Board of Education of the New Hartford Central School District adopts the following policy and procedures to ensure that all students suspected of experiencing academic difficulty shall receive appropriate instruction in reading and mathematics in general education before the district initiates a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE), a process referred to as Response to Intervention (RTI).

### **RTI Process Description**

The district model for the RTI process shall include:

I. Scientific, research-based core instruction in reading. Reading instruction shall include phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension;

II. Screening for all students in grades K-6 at least three (3) times per academic year to identify those who are not making academic progress at the expected rate;

III. Research-based interventions matched to the student's targeted need at increasing levels of intensity for those students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet district-determined standards;

IV. Repeated assessments of targeted skill areas using curriculum-based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward district-determined standards;

V. A building-based team to review screening data, curriculum data, and make related to student performance and intervention need; and

VI. Written notice to parents when the student requires intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom. Written notice to the parents will provide information about:

- A. The techniques, strategies, and programs that will be used to address deficit areas to increase the student's rate of learning and performance level;
- B. The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided;
- C. The parents' right to request an evaluation for special education.

New Hartford Central School District

Adopted: 05/03/11

## Attachment 7

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### GRADING SYSTEMS

This policy will be applied retroactively on July 1, 2015.

#### **Philosophy**

The Indian River School District's grading system is designed to evaluate a student's academic progress and to effectively convey this information to students, parents, and other appropriate parties. Grades are to be used to measure the progress of a student in relation to instructional objectives/standards and other requirements of a course or area of study.

Implementation Procedures shall insure that grading practices are consistent with this policy.

#### Grading Scale for Elementary (Grades 1-5) and Middle School

95 - 100 = A+

90 - 94 = A

85 - 89 = B+

80 - 84 = B

75 - 79 = C+

70 - 74 = C

65 - 69 = D

64 or lower = F

(Grades K - 5)

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory



I = Incomplete

## Grading Scale for High School

### Gen CP Hon AP/IB/AC

95 - 100 = A+ (4.0) (4.5)\* (4.75)\* (5.25)\*

90 - 94 = A (4.0) (4.25) (4.5) (5.0)

85 - 89 = B+ (3.5) (3.75) (4.0) (4.5)

80 - 84 = B (3.0) (3.25) (3.5) (4.0)

75 - 79 = C+ (2.5) (2.75) (3.0) (3.5)

70 - 74 = C (2.0) (2.25) (2.5) (3.0)

65 - 69 = D (1.0)

64 or lower = F (0.0)

.25 bonus for A+

S = Satisfactory

U = Unsatisfactory

I = Incomplete

WD = Withdraw

### Marking Period Grades

A minimum of nine grades will be recorded and used in determining the marking period grade. No individual grade shall count more than 25% of that marking period's grade. The exception will be in middle school exploratory courses. In these courses the minimum number of grades recorded will equal the number of weeks the course meets.

For the purpose of increasing communication with parents grades will be entered electronically in the e-schools grading program a minimum of every two weeks. The building principal may make exceptions under extenuating circumstances.

#### Examinations

1. Middle Schools – Middle Schools will involve students in appropriate types of transitional activities, to be determined by the building's teams and administrators, to assist them in adjusting to the concept of taking examinations when they enter high school.
2. Students in Grades 9 – 11 will take mid-term/final exams. State sponsored exams including end of course exams, may be used instead of district exams at the discretion of the Superintendent or her designee. Final exams for students in Grade 12 will be at the discretion of the building Principal.

#### Report Card Grades

1. Report card grades reflect students' academic growth and progress toward state content area standards. During each marking period formative assessments should consist of a combination of items such as graded classroom assignments, projects, writing assignments, graded homework, and quizzes that measure progress toward state/district adopted standards. Summative assessments such as common assessments, unit tests, and major projects measure students' accomplishment of unit goals. Formative assessment scores will comprise thirty (30) percent of the report card grade and summative measures will comprise seventy (70) percent of the marking period grade. The percentages will be widely communicated to parents and students at the beginning of each school year.
2. Standardized Method of Grade Calculation – Individual teacher grading procedures will be submitted to and approved by the building principal to ensure compliance with district policy.

Numerical averages will be rounded following standard mathematical procedures.

3. A numerical scale shall be used to average, compute, and report grades at the elementary and middle school levels.

4. A numerical scale shall be used to average and compute grades at the high school level. A grade point average (GPA) will be established by using the numerical average from the online teacher grade book and converting it to a letter grade according to the high school grading scale. Letter grades will be used on the report card.

Exceptions:

- a. Kindergarten students will not receive a numerical grade.
  - b. Grades 1 through 5 courses meeting less than three times a week will receive an “S” or “U.”
  - c. Grades 1 through 5 science, social studies, and handwriting will receive an “S,” “N,” or “U.”
  - d. Grades 6 through 8 examination grades will not be recorded as a separate grade on the report card.
  - e. Grades 9 through 12 courses such as driver’s education may be graded “S” or “U” with prior approval of the building principal.
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5. No report card grade will be lower than a 55 for the first three marking periods.
    - a. During the first three marking periods, the parent will be notified in writing of the student’s actual grade earned.
    - b. During the fourth marking period, the student’s actual grade earned will appear on the student’s report card.
      - c. For a course lasting a marking period or a semester, the report card grade will not be lower than a 55.
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6. Final Grades – If no marking period or examination grade of “I” exists, the final grades shall be determined as follows:
    - a. The semester course: Each marking period shall be multiplied by 4 and the exam grade shall be multiplied by 2. The resulting numbers should be totaled and divided by 10 or by 8 if exams are not given.

- b. The yearly course: Each marking period grade should be multiplied by 2, to that number add both exam grades. The resulting numbers should be totaled and divided by 10 or by 8 if exams are not given.
- c. Physical Education grades in the middle schools will be determined by averaging the grades for each grading cycle to arrive at a final average.
- d. Incomplete grades: No final grade may be awarded if an “I” exists for a marking period or an exam grade.
  - 1. Students shall have ten school days after receiving the report card for each of the first three marking periods to make up “I” or incomplete grades. If the student fails to make up the work within the ten school days, the grade of “I” converts to a zero for the work missed and will be used by the teacher in computing marking period grades.
  - 2. Students shall have fourteen calendar days after report cards are distributed at the end of the school year to make up “I” or incomplete grades. Failure to make up the work within the fourteen calendar days will result in “I” work converted to a zero for the work missed and will be used in computing final grades.
  - 3. The building administrator will deal with unusual circumstances.

#### Class Ranking and Valedictorian/Salutatorian

- 1. Ranking is started in the ninth grade and continues until a student completes high school.
- 2. Ranking includes:

All courses will be weighted as shown in the grading scale. College Prep courses will be weighted at 4.25. Courses designated as honors will be weighted at 4.5. Courses designated as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or taken through an approved university will be weighted at 5.0. Weighting occurs on all grades of C or above. Courses that are not graded numerically will not be used in determining class rank. A district-wide administrative committee shall determine the weighting status of established and new courses. The weighting system applies to grade point average and class rank only.
- 3. The senior class valedictorian will be determined in the following way:
  - a. Only seniors who have attended the high school for their last two (2) years will be considered.

- b. The student that meets the above criteria with the highest GPA will be the valedictorian. The student with the second highest GPA will be the salutatorian.
- c. If there is a tie in GPA to the hundredths place, the GPA will be calculated using the numerical final grades from the online grade book. If necessary, the calculation will be carried out to the thousandth place.

### Progress Reports

Progress Reports for elementary students will be issued by classroom teachers and distributed to all students midway through the marking period. Classroom teachers will issue Progress Reports for all secondary students at the end of the third and sixth weeks of each grading period.

### Honor Roll

1. Grades 6 – 8

Students who receive an average grade of 80 or better with no single grade below an 70 in all numerically graded areas and an “S” in areas graded “S” or “U” are eligible for honor roll. Students who receive an average grade of 90 or better with no single grade below an 80 in all numerically graded areas and an “S” in areas graded “S” or “U” are eligible for high honor roll.

2. Grades 9 – 12

3. Students in grades 9 through 12 whose unweighted GPA is a minimum of 3.0 with no grade less than a C are listed on the honor roll, which is compiled and published at the end of each marking period. An unweighted GPA higher than 3.5 with no grade less than a B merits high honors. Any student who fails a course or receives an “I” may not be included on the honor roll.

### Homework

1. A fair and reasonable amount of homework is expected to be assigned at each grade level or subject.

2. All assignments should be checked and/or evaluated as appropriate in order to provide students with corrective feedback on a timely basis.
3. Homework shall be for practice/reinforcement. No new concepts or objectives shall be introduced as homework.

## Attachment 8

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Response to Intervention

### **Philosophy Statement**

The Indian River School District believes that all students should be provided high quality, scientific, research-based general education instruction and when needed, additional services and interventions at increasing levels of intensity aligned with the student's need should be in place. The district recognizes the core components of Response to Intervention (RTI) as a valuable process.

### **RTI Process Description**

In accordance with RTI guidance from the Delaware Department of education and Section 12 of Title 14 of the Delaware Administrative Code, the district shall establish RTI as a District-wide system of providing high quality, researched based instructional interventions to meet the diverse needs of all learners

The district shall follow the established three-tiered RTI model.

#### **Tier 1**

Core Classroom Instruction: Tier 1 services shall be designed to be delivered in a general education setting, by a general education teacher. Instruction shall be delivered with fidelity as part of a scientifically-based core curriculum and matched to student needs.

#### **Tier 2**

Intervention: Tier 2 interventions shall be designed to be delivered primarily in the general education settings, by a general education teacher but may be delivered in other or additional settings or by other trained staff as appropriate to the specific intervention. It shall be implemented with fidelity to its scientific research base and

matched to student needs. Tier 2 interventions shall be delivered for at least 6 school weeks. Progress shall be monitored weekly against established benchmarks.

### Tier 3

Intervention: Tier 3 interventions shall be designed to be delivered primarily in the general education setting by a general education teacher and additional staff but is likely to be delivered in other or additional settings or by other trained staff as appropriate to the specific intervention. It shall be implemented with fidelity to its scientific research base and matched to the student's needs. Tier 3 interventions shall be delivered for at least 6 school weeks. Progress shall be monitored weekly against established benchmarks.

### **Parent Notification**

The school shall inform parents of interventions used to address the identified needs of students who will transition to Tier 2 or Tier 3 of the school's RTI program including strategies used to increase the student's rate of learning.