Implementing RTI at the High School Level

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Some slides from:


Objectives

• Advance understanding of implementing RTI at the high school level.

• Identify and discuss key contextual factors that influence the implementation of RTI at the high school level.
Big Ideas for Educators

- Better tools
- Better training
- More support
Vision for High School with Respect to Providing Multi-Tier Interventions for All Students

Tier 1: Increasing tools, training, and support for content area teachers

Tier 2: Organize more effective and efficient remedial programs or content area supports for at-risk students

Tier 3: Clarify the mission of special education and provide better tools, training, and support
RTI was Designed to Fix Some Things...

- Complaints from 30 years of practice
  - Wait to fail
  - Too many kids without serious educational need qualifying
  - Too few kids with serious educational need NOT qualifying
  - Too many meetings
  - Too much paperwork
  - Too few powerful results

- Results from 30 years of school-based research
  - Schools collected lots of data, much of which was ignored during entitlement
  - SLD was often about power and politics
  - Too few powerful results
What Is Not RTI

• The old way of doing business with a new label

• Reinventing a system that focuses on identifying a disability as the goal

• Expecting the general education teachers to meet the needs of all students
A Multi-Tier Model

CORE Meets the Needs of Most

Some Still Need More

Some Still Need Most
Strategies to Improve General Education Content Teaching Skills

• Good syllabi
• High quality grading
• Big idea focus
• Embedded Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) in pedagogy
• Strategies to Increase Engagement
• Effective, School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support
• Common Assessments for Formative Assessment and Potential Screening
First Steps to Implementing RTI

- Leadership
- Take inventory
- Ensure that special education is worth getting
- Commit to improving the quality of tier 1 instruction
Leadership

• Build commitment
• Give permission and guide the abandonment process
• Allocate resources
• Coordinate staff development
• Ensure that work gets done
Take Inventory

• What’s in the tool box?
• Are secondary special education staff and/or related services competent?

• Secondary staff development
• Syllabi that reflects good pedagogy
• An effective grading system
Ensure that Special Education is Worth Getting

• The Dilemma: Current Special Education is Often Well-Intentioned but Not Aligned with Need

Many secondary special educators may experience increased pressure from parents, administrators, general educators, and students to provide *homework assistance and review or re-teach content-area subject matter*.

Deshler, Ellis, and Lenz (1996) acknowledged that special educators may get caught in this *tutoring trap*, which is a *costly error implemented at the expense of teaching students strategies they can use in their inclusion classes.*
Ensure that Special Education is Worth Getting

• Create a mission and vision statement for your special education program

Without a central philosophy or purpose, special education programs—especially resource rooms—lack definition and can easily become tutoring programs—or anything else others deem it to be.

Be proactive in defining and protecting the purpose and integrity of your program. The mission or vision statement clarifies the intent of the program, its philosophy, and the core responsibilities of the special education teacher, the paraprofessional, and the students.

Commit to Improving the Quality of Tier 1 Instruction

- High Quality Syllabus
- High Quality Grading System
- Well Designed Curriculum
- Effective Strategies to Increase Engagement
- Effective Secondary Classroom Management
- Common Assessments for Formative Evaluation and Screening
- Use of Teaching Routines and Learning Strategies
Big Ideas About Secondary Multi-Tiered Early Intervening Services

- RTI as the secondary level is MORE than just SLD eligibility. It is PART of an ORGANIZED EFFORT to provide all students with
  - High Quality Instruction Using Scientifically Based Practices
  - Early Intervention for Those Who Need It
  - Prevention Services
- By HIGH SCHOOL, we would hope that we WOULDN’T be DISCOVERING DISABILITIES in our students.
- LOTS of students have ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES in middle and high school- EVERY PROBLEM LEARNING IS NOT A SIGN OF A LEARNING PROBLEM.
- SECONDARY RTI is about IMPROVING TIER 1 CONTENT AREA INSTRUCTION and building TIER 2 SUPPORTS FOR AT RISK STUDENTS for academics and behavior
- SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION needs a CLEARER and MORE CONSTRAINED FOCUS.
- We know WHAT TO DO. We need to PUT IT TOGETHER.
Much of this presentation is based on a chapter written for the RTI Answer Book

High School Tiered Interventions Initiative (HSTII)

• Collaboration among three national technical assistance centers
  • Center on Instruction (Special Education Strand)
    www.centeroninstruction.org

  • National Center on Response to Intervention
    www.rti4success.org

  • National High School Center
    www.betterhighschools.org

• Goal is to enhance the understanding of how tiered intervention models are emerging in high schools
HSTII Approach

- Identified high schools implementing tiered interventions based on recommendations
- Contacted 51 high schools
- Interviewed 20 high school administrators
- Convened Technical Advisory Group
- Conducted 8 site visits
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS

- Focus
- Culture
- Instructional Organization
- Staff Roles
- Student Involvement
- Graduation Requirements
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Implementation and Alignment
- Instruction and Assessment Resources
All sites identified improving student achievement as primary goal  
Targeted strategies based on their data  
  • Reducing D’s and F’s  
  • Existing initiative for reducing number of students who are late to class
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Culture

- Synergy between current beliefs and RTI language
- Small learning communities to facilitate connections among students and between students and teachers
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Instructional Organization

- Master Schedule
  - Administrator as a “master scheduler”
  - 4x4 block schedules use “seminar”
  - Traditional 6-8 periods
    - Guided study halls
    - Elective time
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Staff Roles

- Intervention/Classroom Instruction
  - Co-teaching Classes
- Data Team Members
  - Content Teachers
  - Special Education Teachers
  - Administrators
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Literacy Coach
  - School Psychologist
  - Integrated Program Staff
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS:
Site Visit Examples of Student Involvement

- Student-Centered Problem Solving Approach
  - Collaborative decision making process
- Student Data Tracking
  - Graphic representations
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Graduation Requirements

- Tier II and Tier III interventions recorded as:
  - “Study Hall” ➔ no credit
  - Elective credit
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Stakeholder Engagement

- **Stakeholder Involvement**
  - Parents invited to problem-solving meetings
  - Build upon existing initiatives

- **Training and Support**
  - Overall RTI framework PD
  - PD on individual interventions
  - Small learning communities
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Implementation & Alignment

• Coordinated Initiatives
  • Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
  • Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
  • Check and Connect
  • Other school-wide programs

• Leveraged Resources
  • Staff roles (literacy coach, school psychologist, security staff, counselors, etc.)
  • Prioritizing existing PD, time, staff meetings, classroom space, etc.
Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Instruction and Assessment Resources

- Professional/Teacher Learning Communities
  - Weekly
  - Focused on student data

- Determining Interventions & Data Sources
  - Data from previous school
  - Avoidance of duplicating feeder intervention programs
Questions?