

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tiered early prevention and intervention system designed to improve outcomes for all students. In accordance with Commissioner's regulations, the District has established administrative practices and procedures for implementing District-wide initiatives that address an RtI process applicable to all students. For students suspected of having a potential learning disability, the District will provide appropriate RtI services pursuant to Commissioner's regulations prior to a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for evaluation.

The New York State Education Department (SED) has released a guidance document to assist school districts in designing and implementing an effective RtI process, which includes, but is not limited to, information regarding regulatory requirements, quality indicators, staff development, tools to assist districts in selecting a specific model and procedures for the use of RtI data in determining if a student has a learning disability. This guidance document is available on the SED's official website.

The District has established procedures for identifying students with learning disabilities that use a research based RtI process prior to, or as part of, an individual evaluation to determine whether a student has a learning disability. An RtI process is required for all students in grades kindergarten through grade 4 suspected of having a learning disability in the area of reading, mathematics and/or behaviors. RtI cannot be utilized as a strategy to delay or deny a timely initial evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Minimum Requirements of District's RtI Program

The District's RtI process will include the following minimum requirements:

- a) Scientific, research-based instruction in reading and mathematics provided to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel. Instruction in reading, per Commissioner's regulations, means scientific, research-based reading programs that include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies;
- b) Screenings will be provided to all students in the class to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates;
- c) Scientific, research-based instruction matched to student need with increasingly intensive levels of targeted interventions for those students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards;
- d) Repeated assessments of student achievement which should include curriculum-based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward age or grade level standards;
- e) The application of information about the student's response to intervention to make educational decisions about changes in goals [i.e., goals for all students, not just Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals], instruction and/or services and the decision to make a referral for special education programs and/or services; and
- f) Written notification to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about:
 1. The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided as enumerated in Commissioner's regulations;
 2. Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
 3. The parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

Students

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An effective RtI model is a multi-tiered, early prevention continuum designed to improve outcomes for all students. The components of a comprehensive RtI model are outlined as follows:

- RtI is a three-tiered approach. Tier 1 is the core differentiated instructional and behavioral program provided to all students by the general education teacher in the general education classroom. Tier 2 intervention is typically small group (3-5 students) supplemental instruction for ten to fifteen percent of students who are not adequately responding to Tier I instruction. This supplemental instructional intervention is provided in addition to, and not in place of, the core instruction provided in Tier 1. Tier 3 intervention is designed for two to five percent of students who demonstrate insufficient progress in Tier 2. Like Tier 2, the more intensive instruction is provided in addition to and not in place of their core classroom instruction provided in the general education classroom.
- All K-12 students will receive rigorous, research-based, differentiated core instructional strategies and programs that prepare students to succeed in college and careers.
- At the K-6 level, students must receive scientific research-based instruction in reading that includes “explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, including oral reading skills and reading comprehension strategies”.
- At the K-5 level, the core reading program must be scheduled for a 60-minute block of instruction daily.
- Universal screening, which is conducted in the fall and spring of each academic year, will identify students who are not meeting success academically. Screening instruments must be valid and reliable and aligned with grade-level curriculum based on the NYS Learning Standards.
- RtI requires fidelity of implementation. According the NYS Guidance document (Oct. 2010), fidelity of implementation means:
 - (1) intervention/instruction is delivered in the way in which it was designed to be delivered;
 - (2) screening and progress monitoring procedures are administered in a standardized manner, and explicit decision model is followed;
 - (3) instruction and interventions are implemented consistent with research or evidence based practice;
 - (4) staff receive appropriate professional development and
 - (5) administrators provide supervision and serve as instructional leaders (p. 42)
- Periodic checks, known as progress monitoring, will take place to determine if students are responding to the research-based instructional and behavioral strategies and interventions and are making progress towards age or grade-level standards.
- Initial screening and progress monitoring data inform decisions about the level and type of interventions needed to help individual students make progress. Schools typically implement small group interventions using either a standard protocol or a problem-solving model or a combination of the two--hybrid (New York State RtI Guidance, p. 25). A standard protocol model involves the provision of a research validated intervention for a specific amount of time, duration and frequency (minutes per day, days per week, number of weeks) with small groups of students having similar needs (p. 25). A problem-solving model involves an in depth analysis of skill deficits and instructional and behavioral variables that compromise a student’s performance and achievement on New York State Learning Standards.

Students

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- Each school will develop a building-wide instructional and behavioral support team (RTI) to analyze data, identify the problem, examine variables that influence the problem, make decisions about targeted instructional and behavioral interventions, and conduct progress monitoring on a regular basis.
- Appropriate and sustained professional development about assessment tools and procedures, progress monitoring, screening, and instructional and behavioral strategies and interventions will be provided to staff to ensure fidelity of RtI implementation.
- As stated in the NYS RtI Guidance document, “a school district’s process to determine if a student responds to scientific, research-based instruction shall include written notification to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about:
 - (1) The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided pursuant to the structure and components of the RtI program selected by the District.
 - (2) strategies for increasing the student’s rate of learning; and
 - (3) the parents’ right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services” (p. 38).

In conclusion, this policy is aligned with the NYSED Commissioner’s Regulatory Policy framework for RtI and it supports the district’s mission which states the following:

The Red Hook Central School District is a welcoming and diverse community of learners committed to personal growth and caring for others.

34 CFR §§ 300.309 and 300.311

Education Law §§ 3208, 4002, 4401, 4401-a, 4402, and 4410

8 NYCRR §§ 100.2(ii), 200.2(b)(7), 200.4(a), 200.4(j)(3)(i), and 200.4(j)(5)(i)(g)

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