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# Response to Intervention

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# OSEP LD Initiative

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- Workgroup
- Commissioned papers
- LD Summit
- Researcher Roundtable
- Finding Common Ground Roundtable
- Funding the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD)
- Work with RRCs

# Researcher Roundtable

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## **Response to Intervention:**

- There should be alternate ways to identify individuals with SLD in addition to achievement testing, history, and observations of the child. Response to quality intervention is the most promising method of alternate identification and can both promote effective practices in schools and help to close the gap between identification and treatment. Any effort to scale up response to intervention should be based on problem solving models that use progress monitoring to gauge the intensity of intervention in relation to the student's response to intervention. Problem solving models have been shown to be effective in public school settings and in research.

# **Potential Advantages of RTI Approach**

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- Emphasizes use of research-validated instruction.
- Provides assistance to needy children in timely fashion. It is NOT a wait-to-fail model.
- Helps ensure that a student's poor academic performance is not due to poor instruction.
- Assessment data are collected to inform the teacher and improve instruction. Assessments and interventions are closely linked.
- In some RTI models (e.g., Heartland, IA), nonresponders are not given labels, which are presumed to stigmatize and to represent disability categories (e.g., LD, BD, MR) that have little instructional validity.

# Research Identifies Critical Elements of RTI

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- Two goals: prevent future academic problems and assist in identifying students with SLD
- Implementation of a differentiated curriculum with different instructional methods
- Two or more tiers of increasingly intense scientific, research-based interventions
- Intensity addressed through duration, frequency and time of interventions, group size, and instructor skill level

# Research Identifies Critical Elements of RTI

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- Individual problem-solving model or standardized intervention protocol for intervention tiers
- Progress monitoring to assess entire class progress and individual student progress
- Explicit decision rules for assessing learners' progress (e.g., level and/or rate)

# What Does RTI Implementation Look Like?

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- Students receive high-quality, research-based instruction by qualified staff in their general education setting
- General education instructors and staff assume an active role in students' assessment in that curriculum
- School staff conduct universal screening of (a) academics and (b) behavior (> 1/yr)
- School staff implement specific, research-based interventions to address the students' difficulties

# What Does RTI Implementation Look Like?

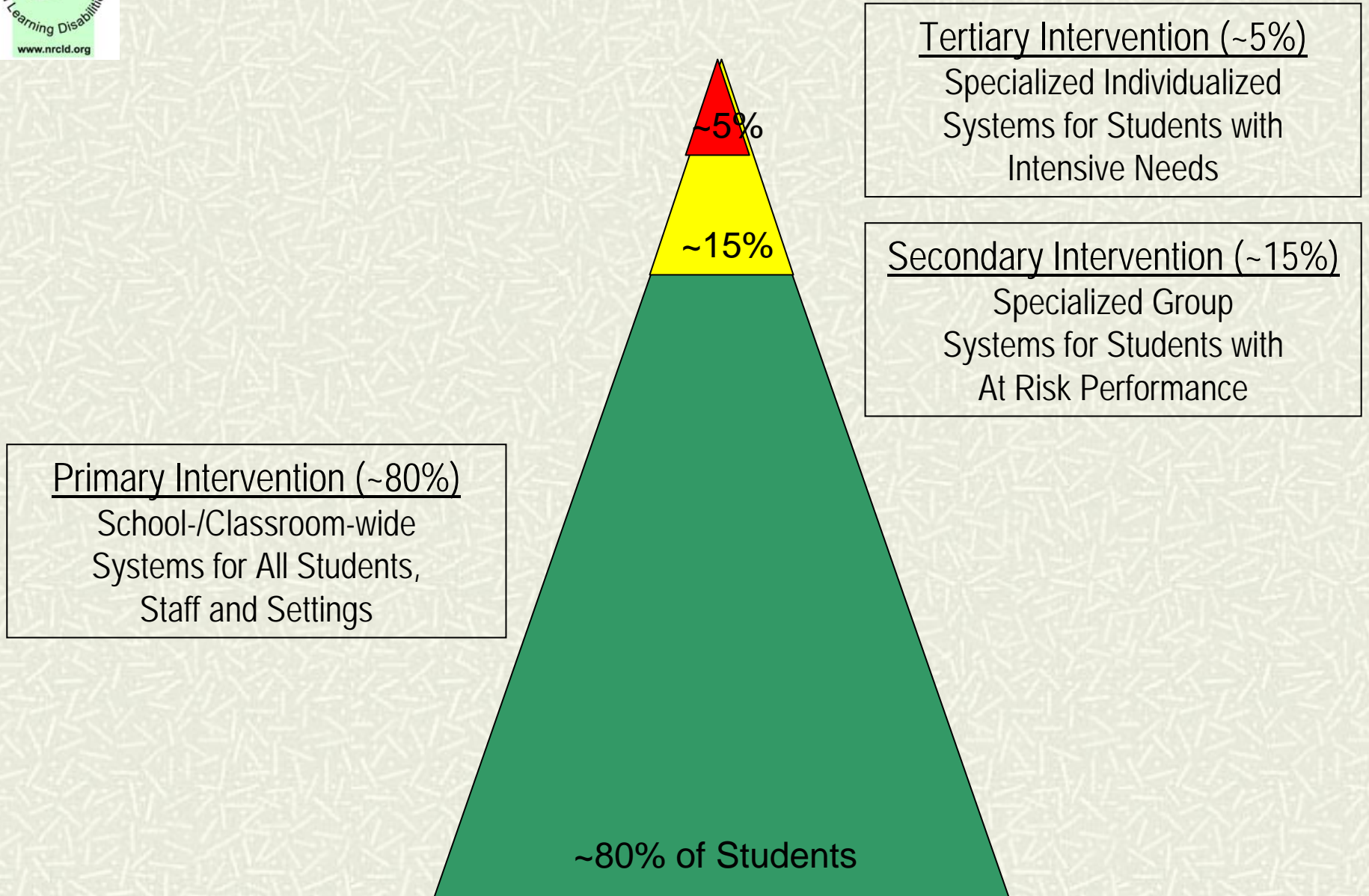
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- School staff conducts continuous progress monitoring of student performance (e.g., weekly or biweekly) for secondary and tertiary interventions, less frequently in general education
- School staff use progress monitoring data and explicit decision rules to determine interventions' effectiveness and needed modifications
- Systematic assessment is made regarding the fidelity or integrity with which instruction and interventions are implemented
- Referral for comprehensive evaluation; FAPE; due process protections



# Continuum of School-Wide Support



## Primary Intervention (~80%)

School-/Classroom-wide  
Systems for All Students,  
Staff and Settings

## Tertiary Intervention (~5%)

Specialized Individualized  
Systems for Students with  
Intensive Needs

## Secondary Intervention (~15%)

Specialized Group  
Systems for Students with  
At Risk Performance

~80% of Students

# A Multi-Tiered RTI Model: Tier 1

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- Tier 1 consists of general education instruction with the following features:
  - Scientific, research-based curriculum
  - Consistent implementation
  - Proven successful for vast majority of students
  - Screen all students, with weekly monitoring of at-risk students who do not respond to general education instruction

# A Multi-Tiered RTI Model: Tier 2+

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- Tier 2+ consists of general education instruction plus the following intervention:
  - Small-group instruction (2-4 students)
  - 3-4 intervention sessions per week (30-60 minutes per session)
  - Conducted by trained and supervised personnel (not the classroom teacher)
  - Conducted in and out of the general education classroom
  - 9-12 weeks in duration (repeated, as needed)

# A Multi-Tiered RTI Model: Final Tier

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- Final tier consists of general education instruction plus an individualized intervention (special education instruction):
  - Individualized instruction (1-3 students)
  - 4-5 intervention sessions per week (60-90 minutes per session)
  - Conducted by trained special education personnel (not the classroom teacher)
  - Conducted in and out of the general education classroom
  - One school-year in duration

# Kansas Symposium on RTI for Classification Data Bases

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- 50% of children deemed at risk by universal screening in first grade "spontaneously recover" by end of fall semester thus, screening in beginning of first grade in this manner results in way too many false positives and unnecessary expenditures of school resources.
- Better to first screen for at risk kids and then monitor their progress for 5 wks (that's all that seems to be needed based on NRCLD research) to see who is responsive to general ed instruction and who is not.
- The non-responders identified in this manner are much more appropriate for tier 2.
- There seemed to be consensus across the data bases presented that dual discrepancy (students performing poorly in terms of both level of performance and rate or growth of performance) was the best operationalization of "responsiveness/non-responsiveness."

# Work with RRCs

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- Identify schools using RtI
- Document the districts' RtI model and associated student outcomes, including their academic progress.
- Compare outcomes for referred students in RtI schools with outcomes for students in otherwise similar schools that use psychometric discrepancy models.
- Determine how RtI corrects or improves on disability determination and outcomes related to equity, consistency, accuracy, timeliness, and fidelity.
- Provide models for future large scale implementation

# RRC “model sites”

## Distinguishing Features

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1. Core reading program (Open Court was used most frequently)
2. Use of universal academic screening (DIBELS was very popular; CBM too)
3. Conducted progress monitoring on the interventions in Tier 2 and higher
4. These were schools that the RRC staffs characterized as “good schools; you felt good about what you saw happening in the schools.”

# Issues across the all of the sites:

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Sites were implementing a problem solving model, a standard protocol approach or most commonly a combination of the two.

1. No one conducted fidelity measures on the Tier 2 interventions.
2. Schools didn't have explicit cut scores for decision-making: is the student responsive/unresponsive?
3. Lack of specification and implementation of the Tier 2 and higher tier interventions
4. Lack of documentation of superior reading outcomes.



# SLD Determination and IDEA 2004 (P.L. 108-446)

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New language in the law:

“... a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures....”

In the special education research literature, the process mentioned in this language is generally considered as referring to RTI.

Sec. 614(b)6B

# RTI

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Ranked in “top three” topics for number of comments on the NPRM

# Key Issues: RTI - SLD Evaluation

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- Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy
- Must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention, and
- May permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has SLD

# Key Issues: RTI - SLD Evaluation

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A public agency must use the State criteria...in determining whether a child has SLD

# Key Issues: RTI - SLD Evaluation

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## Determining existence of SLD

- The child does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or State-approved grade-level standards

# Key Issues: RTI - SLD Evaluation

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## Determining existence of SLD (cont)

- To ensure that underachievement in a child suspected of having a SLD is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group must consider :
  - Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and

# Key Issues: RTI - SLD Evaluation

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## Determining existence of SLD (cont)

- Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child's parents
- Trained observer revised to just observer

# Key Issues:

## RTI - SLD Evaluation

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Specific documentation: if using RTI

- The documentation that the child's parents were notified about -
  - The State's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data that would be collected and the general education services that would be provided
  - Strategies for increasing the child's rate of learning, and
  - The parents' right to request an evaluation



# Key Issues:

## RTI - Definition

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RTI: Must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention

§300.307(a)(2)

- There are many RTI models and the regulations are written to accommodate the many different models that are currently in use
- The Department does not mandate or endorse any particular model

# Key Issues:

## RTI - Parent Notice

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The public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services, and must adhere to the timeframes described in §§300.301 and 300.303

# Key Issues:

## RTI - Parent Bypass and LEA Request for Evaluation

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### Length of time in RTI - Parent Bypass

- Instructional models vary in terms of the frequency and number of repeated assessments that are required to determine a child's progress
- The public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services

# Key Issues:

## RTI - Parent Bypass and LEA Request for Evaluation

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### Length of time in RTI - Discussion

- Models based on RTI typically evaluate the child's response to instruction prior to the onset of the 60-day period
- RTI models provide the data the group must consider on the child's progress when provided with appropriate instruction by qualified professionals as part of the evaluation

# Key Issues:

## RTI - Parent Bypass and LEA Request for Evaluation

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### Length of time in RTI - Discussion

- Instructional models vary in terms of the frequency and number of repeated assessments that are required to determine a child's progress
- It would be inappropriate for the Department to stipulate requirements in Federal regulations that would make it difficult for districts and States to implement instructional models they determine appropriate to their specific jurisdictions

# Key Issues:

## RTI - As Evaluation

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### SLD identification - Components of Comprehensive Evaluation

- RTI does not replace a comprehensive evaluation
- Must use a variety of data-gathering tools and strategies even if RTI is used
- Results of RTI may be one component of the information reviewed

# Key Issues:

## RTI - As Evaluation

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### SLD identification - Components of Comprehensive Evaluation (cont)

- Variety of assessment tools/strategies
- Cannot rely on single procedure as the sole criterion for determining eligibility
- Each State must develop criteria to determine whether a child has a disability

# Web Resources

- National Research Center for Learning Disabilities
  - <http://www.nrclid.org/>
- IRIS Center for Faculty Enhancement
  - <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>
- WESTAT: Disproportionality TA
  - [www.ideadata.org/docs/Disproportionality%20Technical%20Assistance%20Guide.pdf](http://www.ideadata.org/docs/Disproportionality%20Technical%20Assistance%20Guide.pdf)



# For More Information

Please go to

<http://idea.ed.gov>

for resources on IDEA  
2004 Final Regulations

