

What Teachers Want to Know about RtI

We ask teachers beginning to learn about Response to Intervention to discuss the implications of each tier. Here are some of the questions they ask:

About RtI in general:

- Isn't this another special program designed for just struggling students?
- Aren't we already doing everything we can (and can afford) with Title I and special education?
- Isn't RtI just more documentation for pre-referral for special education?
- How can we handle both academics and behavior?

Tier I -- common standards and expectations in the core program:

- What are the expectations 80% of students have to meet? Who decides?
- Do expectations stay constant at the grade level or the content level?
- If fewer than 80% of students are meeting standards in their regular classroom, don't we have to look at teaching methods?
- Isn't getting students up to standards the responsibility of early elementary teachers?
- Aren't we going to have to stop doing other things so we can concentrate on reading and mathematics? Shouldn't we be setting priorities in the core program?
- Where do grades and report cards fit into this?
- Should we go back to homogeneous grouping?
- Are we going back to local assessment system work? How will we decide on valid assessments to use in the classroom?

Tier II -- where more intensive interventions happen:

- Aren't students missing important content when they get extra support? Aren't they going to fall behind somewhere else?
- Shouldn't we just hire RtI teachers?
- Do more intensive interventions only take place outside the regular classroom?
- Is there a percentage cut-off when struggling students can't receive more intensive support outside their classrooms?
- Will alternative education become a dumping ground?
- Why don't we get rid of grade levels completely and work from where students are when they come to us?
- What about gifted students? When time and funding emphasis is on meeting the standards they already exceed, how do we prioritize in a way that promotes growth for them as well?
- Will we need individual student plans for both academics and behavior?

Tier III --

- What is the responsibility of special education in RtI?
- Students are coming to us with more home and family issues than ever. How does RtI help with that?