# Guidance for Selecting Interventions and Additional Challenges

The intent of a [Response to Intervention (RtI)](#) framework , or [multi-level system of supports](#), is to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to be successful, using a personalized learning philosophy so every child graduates college and career ready. Within an RtI framework, it is important to build a continuum of supports for students; this most frequently includes high quality, research-based, differentiated universal/core instruction; increased intensity of research-based instructional strategies; strategic research-based interventions and additional challenges; and scientific research- or evidence-based intensive interventions.

Academic and behavioral **interventions** are research-based strategies or programs that are systematically used with a student or group of students whose universal screening data indicate that they are not likely to meet benchmarks. The intensity of interventions is matched to the intensity of student need and can be adjusted through many dimensions including group size, length, frequency, and duration of implementation. It is important to emphasize that interventions

- are provided IN ADDITION to universal/core instruction;
- should be standards based; and
- should support the skills required to succeed in the universal curriculum.

**Additional challenges** are similar to interventions but are intended to meet the needs of students who are *exceeding* benchmarks. A significant difference, however, is that these learning opportunities should be in place of all or part of the core curriculum rather than in addition to it.

When a screening process determines that a student's needs are not being met through universal instruction alone, there are a number of important questions to ask regarding the system, the child, the interventions/additional challenges, and the supporting research. There are many interventions and additional challenges available to schools, including programs as well as strategies. Each system of support is unique, and the following questions are intended to help school and district teams select the most appropriate interventions and additional challenges for their specific school communities.

Tools that include specific interventions can be found on the Wisconsin RtI Center's website: [www.wisconsinrticenter.org/administrators/rti-in-action/tools.html](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/administrators/rti-in-action/tools.html).

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## System Considerations

It is important to ensure that interventions and additional challenges are supported by a strong system to increase their likelihood of success. Additionally, schools should first and foremost ensure that universal curriculum and instruction is meeting the needs of most students through rigorous, standards-based, differentiated, culturally responsive instruction.

- What percentage of students is in need of interventions/additional challenges? Does this indicate that universal instructional practices and/or curriculum should be refined? Are our universal curriculum and instructional practices differentiated and culturally responsive?
- When we disaggregate our data by subgroup achievement, is there a disproportionately high number of students in a particular subgroup (race, disability status, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status, etc.) who need interventions? Is there a disproportionately low number of students in a particular subgroup who need additional challenges? If so, how can universal curriculum and instructional practices or other institutional structures be refined to more adequately meet the needs of ALL students?
- Is there time in our daily schedule to provide these opportunities?
- Do we have the capacity to provide the necessary effective professional development to implement interventions/additional challenges well?
- What is our plan for evaluating the overall impact of specific interventions/additional challenges?
- Do we have qualified personnel to provide interventions/additional challenges?
- What is our plan for monitoring students' progress as they receive interventions/additional challenges?
- How are families meaningfully involved in the intervention/additional challenge decision-making process?
- What is our process for ensuring that interventions/additional challenges are administered with fidelity?

## Child-Specific Considerations

There are many student-specific characteristics to be mindful of when selecting interventions and additional challenges. The intent of a multi-level system of supports is to provide the most relevant, timely supports possible to all students. Therefore, determining what supports will have the most impact on the individual child is critical.

- What do we know about this student's learning style? What has worked in the past for this particular student? What hasn't?
- Has the student received universal instruction that is culturally and linguistically relevant?
- Are there issues in the child's life that may be interfering with her or his learning or performance?
- How is the student performing relative to her/his peer group? How is that peer group achieving relative to the rest of the student population?
- What is the specific area of need or skill to be addressed?
- What level of intensity of instruction is needed at this time?
- What grade is the student in?

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## Qualities of Interventions/Additional Challenges

Teams should think critically when selecting options for supplementing universal instruction. The characteristics of strategies and programs should be carefully considered to ensure students are receiving effective learning opportunities.

- What level of intensity of support can this intervention provide? Can its intensity be adjusted to meet varied student needs?
- What skill area(s) does it address?
- What grade level is it appropriate for?
- Is it administered to small groups, individual students, or both?
- How much time does it require for delivery?
- Is it culturally relevant to the student(s) we are considering it for?
- Is it standards-based and directly linked to universal curriculum?
- What costs are associated (e.g. professional development, materials)?
- What resources are needed to deliver it (e.g. computers, software, internet, paper/pencil, toolkits)? Do we have these resources?

## Research Considerations

It is important to select interventions/additional challenges that have a strong research base when possible. Both strategies and published programs may be used as interventions, and there are varying levels and quality of research for each intervention. Scientific, research-based interventions that are locally evidenced are strongly encouraged. However, schools will find that a continuum of research standards apply and varying levels of research-base are required for different purposes (e.g. for specific learning disability eligibility determination a highly rigorous level is required). Depending on the needs of the student, interventions may include a variety of formats, including increased intensity of research-based instructional strategies; structured research-based interventions and additional challenges; and scientific research- or evidence-based intensive interventions.

- What level of research is required for the purpose of this intervention/challenge?
- What is the effectiveness rating (the extent to which the research has shown the intervention/additional challenge caused an improvement in outcomes)?
- What is the effect size (the amount of change that can be expected)?
- What is the extent of evidence (the amount of evidence that was used to determine the rating of effectiveness and how broadly findings may be applied to different settings)?
- Has it been shown to be effective when delivered to students who are demographically similar to the student(s) with whom you will use it?