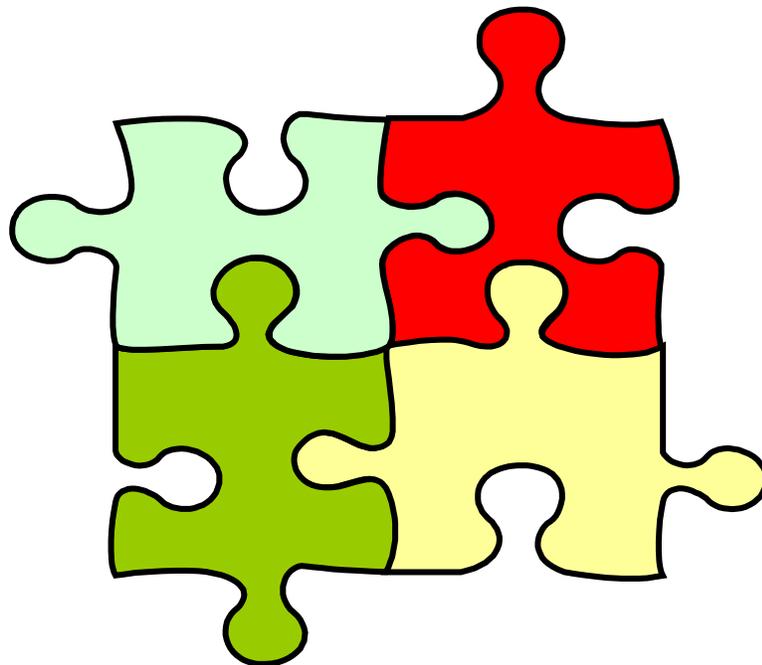


RtI

Response to Intervention

“A Problem-Solving Approach to Student Success”



Guide Document



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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview for Response to Intervention (RtI) practices in Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools and explain the essential components of RtI. This RtI guidance document is designed to assist parents and teachers in understanding RtI, its origins in educational practice and research, its usefulness and value, and how it can be implemented. It is not intended to be a substitute for training but rather is intended to increase understanding of the various aspects of RtI.

Defining RtI

In Wisconsin, Response to Intervention (RtI) is defined as a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students. Rigorous implementation of RtI includes a combination of high quality instructional practice, balanced assessment, and collaboration, all of which are infused with culturally responsive practices. Further, RtI systems use a multi-level system of support to identify and respond to student need. Implementation of a multi-level system of support includes meaningful family involvement, data-based decision making, and effective leadership. Comprehensive RtI implementation will contribute to increased instructional quality, equitable access to high quality of effective programming, and will assist with the identification and support of learners with varied abilities and needs. The [Wisconsin RtI Roadmap](#) (Appendix A) illustrates how the essential elements function within an enacted RtI system and how the system adjusts to meet the needs of students.

Why RtI?

RtI is built on the idea of intervening early to prevent failure and to maximize the effectiveness of grade level curriculum and instruction. It is a framework for providing high quality curriculum and instruction to all students and intervention support for some students.

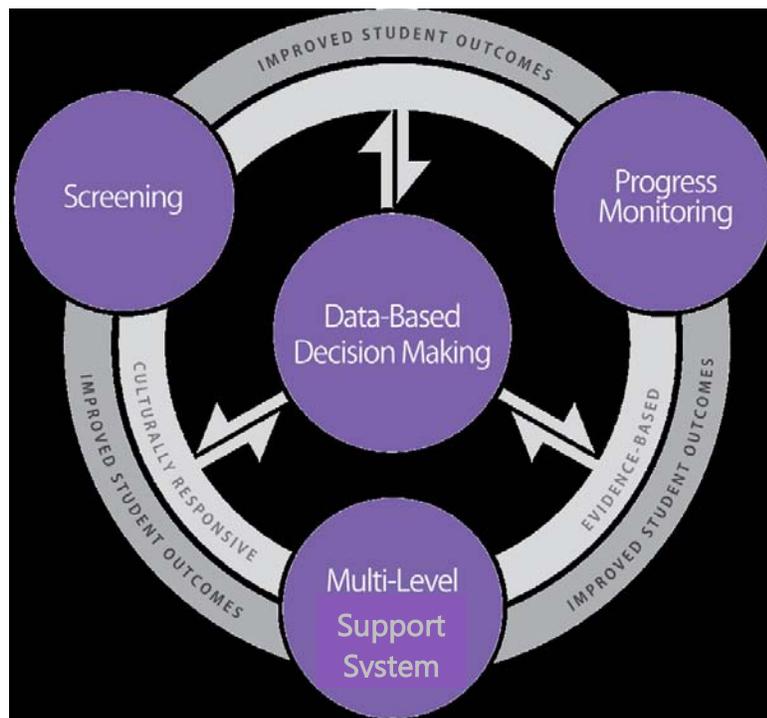
FOUR ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF RtI

There are four essential components of RtI within Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools:

1. A school-wide, **multi-level instructional and behavioral system** for preventing school failure.
2. **Screening**.
3. **Progress Monitoring**.
4. **Data-based decision making** for high quality instruction, movement within the multi-level system, and special education identification (in accordance with state law).

The graphic below represents the relationship among the essential components of RtI. Data-based decision making is the essence of good RtI practice; it is essential for the other three components: **screening**, **progress monitoring**, and **multi-level instruction**.

All components must be implemented using **culturally-responsive** and **evidence-based** practices.



Component 1: Multi-Level System of Support

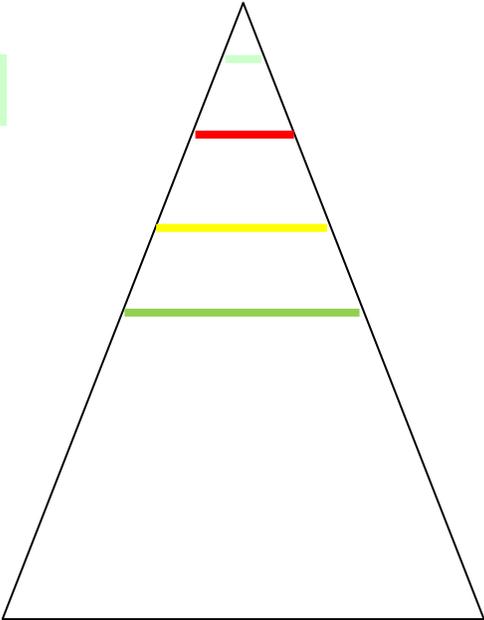
A rigorous system of support provides for the early identification of learning and behavioral challenges and timely intervention for students who are at risk for long-term learning problems, or in need of additional academic challenges. This system includes four levels of intensity, which represent a continuum of supports. Schools may use more than one intervention within a given level.



- Tier 1:** High quality core instruction that meets the needs of most students.
- Tier 2:** Evidence-based intervention(s) of moderate intensity that address(es) the learning or behavioral challenges of students requiring additional support or academic challenges.
- Tier 3:** Individualized, targeted, and skill-specific intervention(s) for students who do not meet, or exceed, Tier 2 benchmarks (as established within the individual Tier 2 interventions).
- Tier 4:** Student is provided an intensive intervention program through the Special Education Program with an individual education plan (IEP) or through the Able Learner program with a differentiated education plan (DEP).

Tier 4	<u>Special Education/Able Learner</u> 3-5%
Tier 3	<u>Alternate Curriculum</u> 7-10%
Tier 2	<u>Core Curriculum</u> <10%
Tier 1	<u>Core Curriculum</u> < 80%

(% are approximations based on yearly student populations)



At all Tiers, attention is on fidelity of implementation, with consideration for cultural and linguistic responsiveness and recognition of student strengths.

Classroom instructors are encouraged to use research-based curricula in all subjects. When a student is identified via universal screening as requiring additional intervention, evidence-based interventions of moderate intensity are provided at the Tier 2 level. These interventions, which are in addition to the core instruction, typically involve small-group instruction to address specific identified problems. These evidence-based interventions are well defined in terms of duration, frequency, and length of sessions, and the intervention is conducted as it was in the research studies. Students who respond adequately to Tier 2 interventions return to Tier 1 (the core curriculum) with ongoing progress monitoring. Students who show minimal response to Tier 2 interventions move to Tier 3, where more intensive and individualized supports are provided. All instructional and behavioral interventions should be selected with attention to their evidence of effectiveness and with sensitivity to culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Instruction at the Tier 1 Level

Instruction at the least intensive level of the RtI framework typically includes the core curriculum and the instructional practices used for all students. This includes:

- a core curriculum that is research-based;
- instructional practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive;
- universal screening to determine student's current level of performance;
- differentiated learning activities (e.g., mixed instructional grouping, use of learning centers, peer tutoring) to address individual needs;
- accommodations to ensure all students have access to the instructional program;
- problem solving to identify interventions, as needed, to address behavior concerns that prevent students from demonstrating the academic skills they possess.

Core curriculum stems from and is directly shaped by the standards, the District curricular framework, and the effective use of formative, summative, and benchmark assessments. Students who require interventions continue to receive instruction in the core curriculum.

Instruction at the Tier 2 Level

Instruction at the Tier 2 level of the RtI framework typically involves small-group instruction that relies on evidence-based interventions that specify the instructional procedures, duration (typically 10 to 15 weeks of 20- to 40-minute sessions), and frequency (3 or 4 times per week) of instruction. Tier 2 intervention has at least three distinguishing characteristics: Evidence-based (rather than research-based); relies entirely on teacher-led small-group instruction rather than whole-class instruction; and involves a clearly articulated, validated intervention, which should be adhered to.

Instruction at the Tier 3 Level

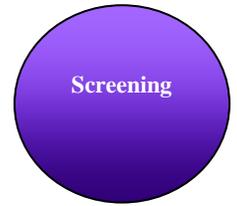
Instruction at Tier 3 is more intensive than Tier 2 and is individualized to target each student's area(s) of need. Targeted and skill-specific intervention accompanied by frequent progress monitoring (i.e., at least weekly) occur at Tier 3. The progress monitoring data quantifies the effects of the intervention by depicting the student's rate of improvement over time. When the progress monitoring data indicates the student's rate of progress is unlikely to achieve the established learning goal, the teacher engages in a problem-solving process. That is, the teacher modifies components of the intervention and continues to employ frequent progress monitoring to evaluate which components enhance the rate of student learning. By continually monitoring and modifying (as needed) each student's program, the teacher is able to design an effective, individualized instructional program.

Instruction at the Tier 4 Level

An individual education plan (IEP) or differentiated educational plan (DEP) is required. The student is provided instruction through the Special Education Program or Able Learner program. Instruction at this level involves the intense modification of the specific student's learning needs as stated in an IEP or DEP.

See District RtI Flowchart (Appendix B)

Component 2: Screening



Students are identified through a two-stage screening process. The first stage, **universal screening**, is a brief assessment for all students conducted at the beginning of the school year; however, some schools and districts use it 2-3 times throughout the school year. WRPS will use its screener three times each year (fall, winter, and spring) for all students, and five times a year for targeted students. For students who score below the cut point on the universal screener, a second stage of screening is then conducted to more accurately predict which students are truly at risk for poor learning outcomes. This second stage involves additional, more in-depth testing or short-term progress monitoring to confirm a student's at-risk status. Screening tools must be reliable, valid, and demonstrate diagnostic accuracy for predicting which students will develop learning or behavioral difficulties or may require additional challenges.

Component 3: Progress Monitoring



Progress monitoring is a process used to assess a student's academic and behavioral performance, to measure student improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. This process is also used to monitor a student's response to specific interventions or additional challenges. Progress monitoring can be formal (quantifiable, norm-referenced tools) or informal (teacher-developed formative tools) and can be implemented with individual students or an entire class. The frequency of progress monitoring will increase with the intensity of an intervention or additional challenge. Like universal screening, progress monitoring is a process, and thus data should include multiple pieces of evidence with a focus on individual student improvement as well as small group improvement.

RtI is a system for increased success for *all* students, and universal screening and progress monitoring are central to this system. RtI may also be used as a method for identifying students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). As a student moves further toward a process of a SLD determination, by rule, the criteria of progress monitoring tools becomes more stringent to ensure strict consistency, fidelity, and reliability across the state. Making educational decisions based on multiple types of data is equally important to this process. For more information on the SLD determination process as it relates to the RtI system, see <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ld.html>.

Component 4: *Data-Based Decision-Making*



Collaboration is a process where people work together toward common goals. Collaboration as part of an RtI system includes educators, families, and communities working together both formally and informally. This partnership builds and implements a model that identifies and provides supports to students to increase their academic and behavioral success through **data-based decision making**. Collaborative protocols such as problem-solving processes and professional learning communities (PLC) can be used to systematize discussions of student, class, grade, school, district, and state-level data. The frequency and intensity of collaborative teaming should increase with the intensity of student need.

RESOURCES ON IMPLEMENTING RtI

- National Center on Response to Intervention [www.rti4success.org]
Evidence-based tools and assessments on tiered instruction, progress monitoring, and screening available under “Tools/Interventions” tab; considerations and ideas for teachers available for RtI stakeholders in Center’s library.
- Wisconsin RtI Center [www.wisconsinrticenter.org]
Collaborative project between DPI and the 12 CESAs to provide high quality RtI professional development and technical assistance regionally throughout Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) [www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.com] Network Operates within the RtI Center.
- Culturally Responsive Education for All: Training and Enhancement (CREATE) [www.createwisconsin.net]
DPI funded statewide project to provide supports to districts with the goal of transforming schools and unlocking the potential of all students.
- What Works Clearinghouse [<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>]
Practice guides on reading and mathematics interventions available under “Publications and Products” and reviews of the evidence base for published interventions.
- Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics [www.corestandards.org]
Newly adopted (June 2010) Wisconsin English and mathematics standards.
- RtI Action Network [www.rtinetwork.org/essential/assessment]
Articles on progress monitoring and data-based decision making are available.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is at the Heart of RtI?

The purpose of RtI is to provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, identify students with learning or behavioral problems, and ensure that they receive appropriate instruction and related supports. The goals of RtI are to (a) integrate all the resources to minimize risk for the long-term negative consequences associated with poor learning or behavioral outcomes, and (b) strengthen the process of appropriate disability identification.



What Impact Does RtI Have on Students Who Are Not Struggling?

An important component of an effective RtI framework is the quality of the core curriculum where **all** students receive high-quality instruction that is culturally and linguistically responsive and aligned to a state's achievement standards. This allows teachers and parents to be confident that a student's need for more intensive intervention or referral for special education evaluation is not due to ineffective classroom instruction. In a well designed RtI system, instruction at the Tier 1 level should be effective and sufficient for about 80 percent of the student population.

What Are Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practices?

The use of culturally and linguistically responsive practices by teachers and other school staff involves purposeful consideration of the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors that may have an impact on students' success or failure in the classroom. Attention to these factors, along with the inclusion of cultural elements in the delivery of instruction, will help make the strongest possible connection between the culture and expectations of the school and the culture(s) that students bring to the school. Instruction should be differentiated according to how students learn, build on existing student knowledge and experience, and be language appropriate. In addition, decisions about interventions should be informed by an awareness of students' cultural and linguistic strengths and challenges in relation to their responsiveness to instruction.

What Are Differentiated Learning Activities?

Teachers use student assessment data and knowledge of student readiness, learning preferences, language, and culture to offer students in the same class different teaching and learning strategies to address their needs. Differentiation can involve mixed instructional groupings, team teaching, peer tutoring, learning centers, and accommodations to ensure that all students have access to the instructional program. Differentiated instruction is NOT the same as providing more intensive interventions to students with learning problems.

What Is the RtI Framework?

The RtI framework within Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools has four levels of support: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4 (Special Education/Able Learner). Through this framework, student assessment and instruction are linked for data-based decision-making. As students move through the framework's specified levels of support, their instructional program becomes more intensive and more individualized to target their specific areas of learning or behavioral needs.

What Is the Difference Between Evidence-Based Interventions and Research-Based Curricula?

We refer to an evidence-based intervention in this document as an intervention for which data from scientific, rigorous research designs have demonstrated (or empirically validated) the efficacy of the intervention. That is, within the context of a group or single-subject experiment or a quasi-experimental study, the intervention is shown to improve the results for students who receive the intervention. Research-based curricula, on the other hand, may incorporate design features that have been researched generally; however, the curriculum or program as a whole has not been studied using a rigorous research design, as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Is RtI a Special Education Program?

No. RtI is not synonymous with special education. Rather, special education is an important component of a comprehensive RtI framework that incorporates Tiers 1-4. All school staff (e.g., principal, general educators, special educators, content specialists, psychologists) work together to implement the RtI framework and make decisions regarding appropriate intensity of interventions for students. Movement to less intensive levels of the framework should be a high priority, as appropriate.

What Does RtI Have To Do With Identifying Students for Special Education?

IDEA 2004 allows states to use a process based on a student's response to scientific, research-based interventions to determine if the child has a specific learning disability (SLD). In an RtI framework, a student's response to or success with instruction and interventions received across the levels of RtI would be considered as part of the comprehensive evaluation for SLD eligibility.

How does an RtI system benefit students who are exceeding benchmarks, and what are the special considerations?

An RtI system can be successfully used to identify the needs of and provide appropriate programming for students with gifts and talents, as required by State Statute. Since RtI is a school-wide initiative (i.e., systematic), it is an effective way

to provide systematic and continuous services beyond the core curriculum for high-ability students. An RtI system uses balanced assessment to provide a comprehensive picture of student needs in order to make instructional decisions to respond to those needs. Progress monitoring ensures that these learning opportunities are appropriate and result in student growth. For additional information on gifted and talented education, please refer to the *Gifted and Talented Resource Guide* published by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction at <http://dpi.wi.gov/cal/pdf/gtguide.pdf>.

How Does an RtI Framework Work in Conjunction with Inclusive School Models and Least Restrictive Environment? Aren't Students Requiring More Intensive Levels of Instruction Removed from the General Education Classroom to Receive Those Services?

Within an RtI framework, the levels refer only to the intensity of the services, not where the services are delivered. Students may receive different levels of support within the general education classroom or in a separate location with a general education teacher or other service providers. This is an important decision for educators to consider carefully.

Can Students Move Back and Forth Between Levels of the Support System?

Yes, students should move back and forth between the levels of the support system based on their success (response) or difficulty (minimal response) at the level where they are receiving intervention, (i.e., according to their documented progress based on the data). Also, students can receive intervention in one academic or behavioral area at the Tier 2 or Tier 3 level while receiving instruction in another academic or behavioral area at the Tier 1 level.

GLOSSARY

Able Learner

A Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools' program designed to provide support to students who have been evaluated and placed into the District's gifted and talented program.

Additional Challenges

Additional challenges are research-based strategies that are systematically used with a student or group of students whose screening data indicate that they are likely to exceed benchmarks. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

The intensity of the challenge is matched to the intensity of student need and can be adjusted through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks are the minimum performance levels students are expected to reach by certain points of the year in order to meet end-of-year performance goals. The end-of-year benchmark typically represents the minimum level of performance required by state or local standards. (Arneson, Lisa – CESA 5)

Child Study Team (CST)

A CST includes the school psychologist, building administrator, classroom teacher, parents, and any resource staff member involved in providing service to the child in question. The CST starts the process of the documentation of interventions within an intervention management system. (WRPS RtI Facilitators)

Core Instruction

Core instruction refers to the curriculum, instruction, and assessment that all students receive. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Criterion-Referenced Assessment

Criterion-referenced assessments measure what a student understands, knows, or can accomplish in relation to a specific performance objective. It is typically used to identify a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in relation to an age or grade level standard. It does not compare students to other students. (National Center on Response to Intervention)

Culturally Responsive Practices

Culturally responsive practices account for and adapt to the broad diversity of race, language and culture within Wisconsin schools and prepare all students for a multicultural world. Within Wisconsin's vision for RtI, culturally responsive practices are evident in and infused throughout all levels of each of the three essential elements. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is culturally and linguistically appropriate and reflects a dynamic adjustment to student needs such as readiness, interest or learning style. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Fidelity of Implementation

Fidelity refers to the accurate and consistent provision or delivery of instruction in the manner in which it was designed or prescribed according to research findings and/or developers' specifications. Five common aspects of fidelity include: Adherences, exposure, program differentiation, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery. (National Center on Response to Intervention)

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a form of evaluation used to plan instruction in a recursive way. With formative assessment, student progress is systematically assessed to provide continuous feedback to both the student and the teacher concerning learning successes and failures. With formative assessments, the teacher can diagnose skill, ability and knowledge gaps, measure progress, and evaluate instruction. Formative assessments are not necessarily used for grading purposes. Examples include (but are not limited to): CBM, CBA, pre/post tests, portfolios, quizzes, teacher observations, and teacher/student conferencing. (National Center on Response to Intervention)

Intervention

Academic or behavioral interventions are research-based strategies that are systematically used with a student or group of students whose screening data indicate that they are likely to not meet benchmarks. The intensity of interventions is matched to the intensity of student need and can be adjusted through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Intervention Team

An Intervention team is a collection of staff directly involved in providing a specific intervention plan to the student. This collaborative team will:

- determine the format, the specific nature, and the intensity of the instructional intervention selected by the CST for use by the Intervention Team;
- establish the frequency of progress monitoring;
- be responsible for the documentation of all scores received during the intervention;
- create the communications within the intervention management system that shares the growth or lack of growth through the intervention with the rest of the CST. (WRPS RtI Facilitators)

Norm-Referenced Assessment

Norm-referenced assessments compare a student's performance to that of an appropriate peer group. (National Center of Response to Intervention)

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is a process used to assess student academic and behavioral performance, to measure student improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. The frequency of progress monitoring increases with the intensity of an intervention or additional challenge. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Response to Intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RtI, schools identify students whose learning outcomes fall significantly below or above those of their grade level peers at various benchmarks throughout the school year; monitor student progress; provide evidence-based interventions; adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness; and identify students for placement into an SLD or Able Learner program. (National Center on Response to Intervention; WRPS RtI Facilitators)

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Sec. 300.8(c)(10) Specific learning disability. (i) General. Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as

perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

For information on using an RtI model for identifying students with a specific learning disability (SLD), see <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ld.html>. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Students within this program have been evaluated and have been determined to require an individual education plan (IEP) that addresses the specific learning needs of the child, the format by which these needs will be addressed, and the specific roles and responsibilities of the instructors who are assigned to provide the instruction. (WRPS RtI Facilitators)

Summative Assessments

These forms of evaluation are used to describe the effectiveness of an instructional program or intervention, that is, whether the intervention had the desired effect. With summative assessments, student learning is typically assessed at the end of a course of study or annually (at the end of a grade). (National Center on Response to Intervention)

Tiered Instruction

Tiered Instruction describes levels of instructional intensity within a multi-tiered system of support.

Tier 1: Tier 1 is high quality, culturally responsive core academic and behavioral instruction that is differentiated for student need and aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for mathematics and English language arts and other state and local standards. Core instruction refers to the curriculum, instruction and assessment that all students receive.

Tier 2: Tier 2 interventions supplement Tier 1 interventions in that students receive additional research-based preventative treatment or additional challenges. Tier 2 interventions are often implemented in small group settings. Tier 2 interventions have at least three distinguishing characteristics: Evidence-based (rather than research-based); rely entirely on adult-led small-group instruction rather than whole-class instruction; and involve a clearly articulated, validated intervention, which should be adhered to.

Tier 3: Instruction at the Tier 3 level is more intensive than Tier 2, and is individualized to target each student's area(s) of need. Targeted and skill-specific interventions accompanied by frequent progress monitoring (i.e., at least weekly) occur at Tier 3. The progress moni-

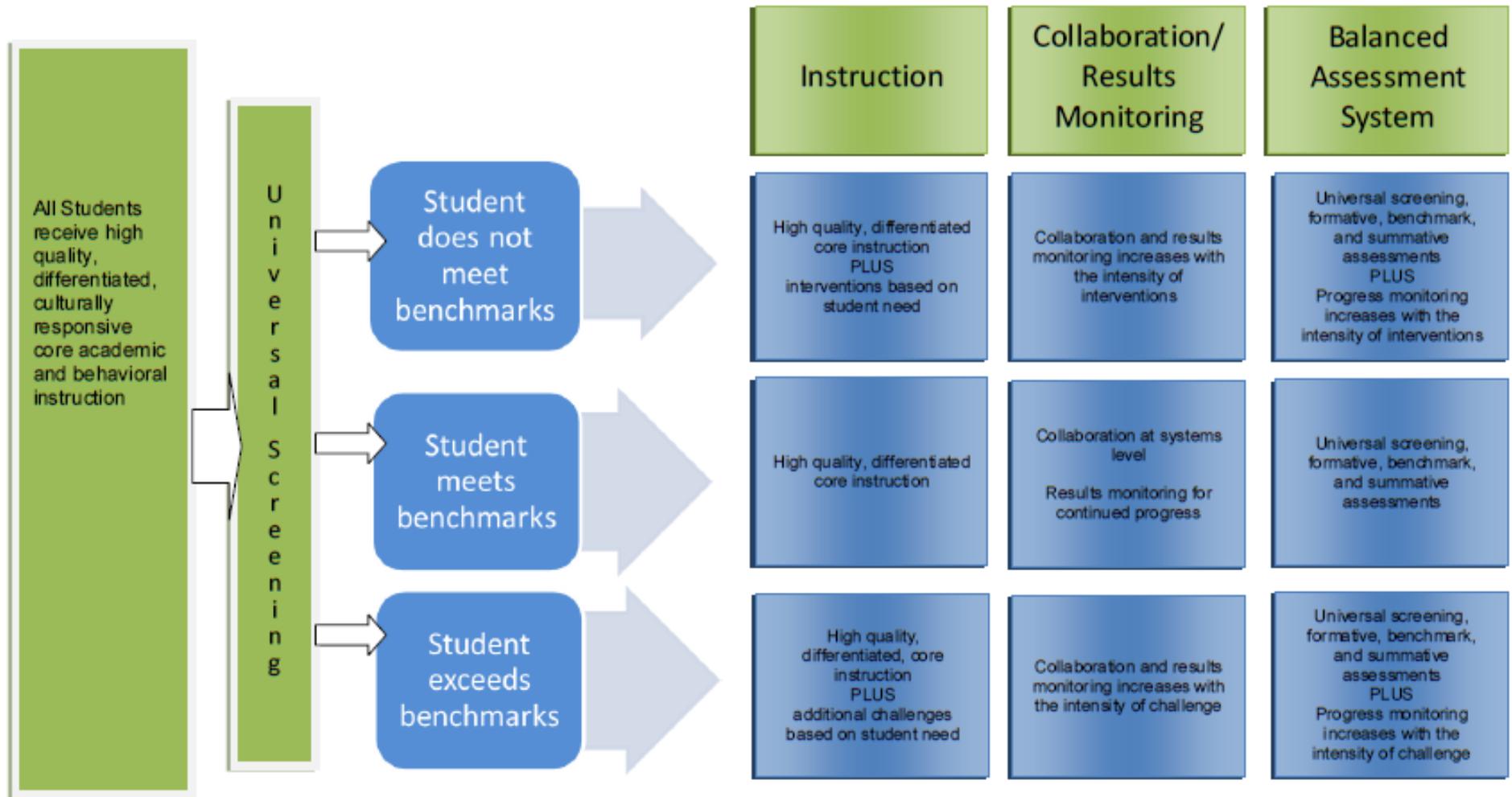
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Tier 4: An individual education plan (IEP) or differentiated educational plan (DEP) is required. The student is provided instruction through the Special Education Program or Able Learner program. Instruction at this level involves the intense modification of the specific student's learning needs as stated in an IEP or DEP.

Universal Screening

Universal screening is a process through which data from multiple measures is accurately analyzed to determine whether each student is likely to meet, exceed, or not meet benchmarks and can be constructed for both academic and behavioral purposes. (Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document)

Wisconsin Response to Intervention Roadmap: A Model for Academic and Behavioral Success for All Students Using Culturally Responsive Practices



The Wisconsin RtI Roadmap (<http://dpi.wi.gov/rti/pdf/rti-roadmap.pdf>) illustrates how the three essential elements function within an enacted RtI system and how the system adjusts to meet the needs of students.

