

Response to intervention (rti)



Even though all parents want to see their child excel in s such as reading and math and get along with peers and teachers, the emergence of children who have difficulty learning in school is inevitable and Response to Intervention (RTI) is a technique in addressing this issue. “ Response to Intervention” refers to a process that emphasizes how well students respond to changes in direction and its approach includes elements such as providing scientific, research-based instructions and interventions in general education, monitoring and measuring student progress in response to the instruction and interventions and using these measures of student progress to shape instruction and make educational decisions (Klotz and Kanter, 2007, p. 1). RTI is in line with the provisions of the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) which promotes equity, accountability and excellence in education for students with disabilities along with the debate on how to identify students as learning disabled (LD) and the need for special education of these students. According to Cortiella, of the 6 million children in special education, half of those are identified as having a “ specific learning disability” and the number has grown more than 300 percent since 1976 thus policy makers have consistently expressed concern about the substantial number of students being served as LD under IDEA (2006, p. 5). Research suggested that the prior methods of identifying students’ eligibility for special education services requires students to fall behind or accumulate failure for a long period of time even though recent studies show that the more a student is delayed the more help he or she will need close the achievement gap.

Before the advent of RTI, the U. S. Department of Education crafted the regulations to implement the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of

1975 now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act which needed to provide a process and criteria for identifying students in the category of specific learning disability (Cortiella, 2006, p. 5). Educators then used the ability-achievement discrepancy model, which requires children to take ability or IQ tests and academic achievement tests, comparison of standard scores and the recognition of a severe discrepancy between the child's achievement score and ability score.

The IDEA law enacted on 2004 also provides grants to states, discretionary grants for research, technology and training. This act also authorizes up to 15% of IDEA funds to be used to provide services to students before they are identified with a disability and supplemental materials that are aligned to reinforce a scientifically based comprehensive “ core curriculum” or a state-standards-based accountability system as referred to in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy (James, 2004, p. 2-3). Nevertheless, each Early Intervening Service (EIS) has its own regulations that indicate how and on whom the EIS funds can be spent; the reporting requirements, special provisions regarding disproportionality based on race and ethnicity and how that affects a Local Educational Agency's (LEA) use of EIS funds (Burdette, 2007, p. 1).

Speech-Language Pathologists are increasingly important as facilitators of the diagnosis of LD and in adopting this relatively new technique of an early intervening service. This involves a decrease in time spent on traditional models of intervention, an example would be pull-out therapy, more time on consultation and classroom-based intervention the allocation and assignment of staff based on time needed for indirect services and support activities, and not based solely on direct services to children with disabilities

(Ehren et. al, 2006, p. 4)

In accordance with IDEA, RTI is implemented in the Oceanside Union Free School District as a stipulation in the Superintendents Regulation which states that “ all students who are experiencing academic difficulty as indicated by impending multiple failures, are discussed at team meetings and are offered any number of interventions, referred to as the Individualized Intervention Plan” (2006, 19c). Students on this plan will be considered on academic probation and notification will be given to their parents. Those who attend after-school activities may be asked to share their academic report sheet with their coach or advisor and attend extra-help classes, homework clinics and volunteer tutoring programs as prescribed by the teacher.

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