

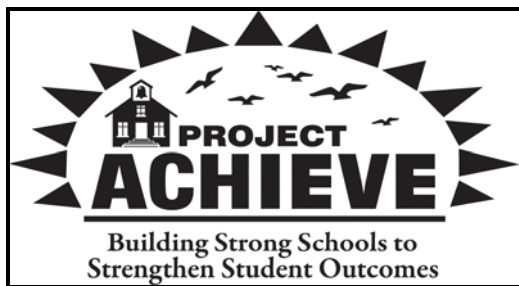
# Integrating the School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team (SPRINT) and Response-to-Instruction/Intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) Process: A Model Implementation Guidebook for Schools and Districts



**Project ACHIEVE Press**

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# **Integrating the School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team (SPRINT) and Response-to-Instruction/Intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) Process**

## **A Model Implementation Guide for Schools and Districts**

### **Section I: Introduction and Overview**

The goal of every school across the country is to maximize the academic and social, emotional, and behavioral progress and proficiency of every student. This is accomplished through (a) effective and differentiated classroom instruction, complemented with (b) positive and successful classroom management, that (c) is delivered by highly qualified teachers who have (d) administrators, instructional support and related services staff, and other consultants available to support these classroom, grade-level or teaching unit, and other school programs and processes. All of this results in students who can demonstrate age-appropriate (or beyond) independent learning and behavioral self-management skills.

For most states across the country, this effective school and schooling process is supported by various state, regional, and local initiatives and supports. The state-level initiatives often are driven by legislation and/or state department of education policy, regulations, and practices. At the same time, they also may include initiatives implemented by state professional associations, foundation and advocacy groups, and others.

At the state department of education level, the following initiatives typically are evident:

- A comprehensive school improvement planning and implementation process that often involves annual school and/or district School Improvement Plans (SIPs) that focus on all students' academic and social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes;
- Programs that concentrate on closing achievement gaps (CTAG) among different groups of students (e.g., students from different racial or socio-economic backgrounds);
- A differentiated school and district accountability process that evaluates student outcomes and school effectiveness, and provides consultation, technical assistance, and other services and supports to those schools or districts in need of improvement;
- A multi-tiered, response-to-instruction and intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) system to address at-risk, underachieving, unresponsive, and unsuccessful students who are not demonstrating academic and/or social, emotional, and behavioral progress, mastery, and proficiency

even though they are receiving effective instruction in positive, well-managed school and classroom settings;

- Comprehensive pre-service and post-credential personnel and professional development and evaluation programs and activities that often are coordinated with the Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs); and
- A statewide system of support (SSOS) that identifies and coordinates state, regional, and local programs and resources to help districts and schools in targeted areas of continuous improvement and student services and supports.

On a more functional level, all of these initiatives need to be integrated into an evidence-based effective school and schooling model and process. Below is Project ACHIEVE's effective schools/Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) model (see Figure 1). Project ACHIEVE was identified in 2000 as an evidence-based school improvement program by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This model has the following interdependent components:

- Data-driven Leadership
- Core Curricula
- Positive Academic Supports and Services (PASS)
- Positive Behavioral Support Systems (PBSS)
- Professional Development and Mentoring
- Parent and Community Outreach
- Academic Instruction, Assessment, and Intervention
- Behavioral Instruction, Assessment, and Intervention
- The School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team (SPRINT) process

### **Purpose of this Guidebook**

A critical part of a school or district's continuous improvement process involves its ability to provide students with the services, supports, strategies, and programs that they need to be successful in all academic and social, emotional, and behavioral areas. As noted above, there are times when students are not demonstrating the academic and/or social, emotional, and behavioral progress, mastery, and proficiency needed. In order to effectively and efficiently respond, district need to develop a comprehensive and consistent multi-tiered, response-to-instruction and intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) system

This guidebook outlines a model SPRINT (School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team)/RtI<sup>2</sup> system that has been used across the country as part of Project ACHIEVE's effective school and schooling system. Written as an "Implementation Guide," a school or district could adopt, use, and/or adapt this document to organize its multi-tiered RtI<sup>2</sup> policy, procedures, actions, and decision rules. This guide has a number of appendices to facilitate a district or school's actual step-by-step implementation. One appendix uses a "Question and Answer" format to address some of the essential elements of this important service delivery process.

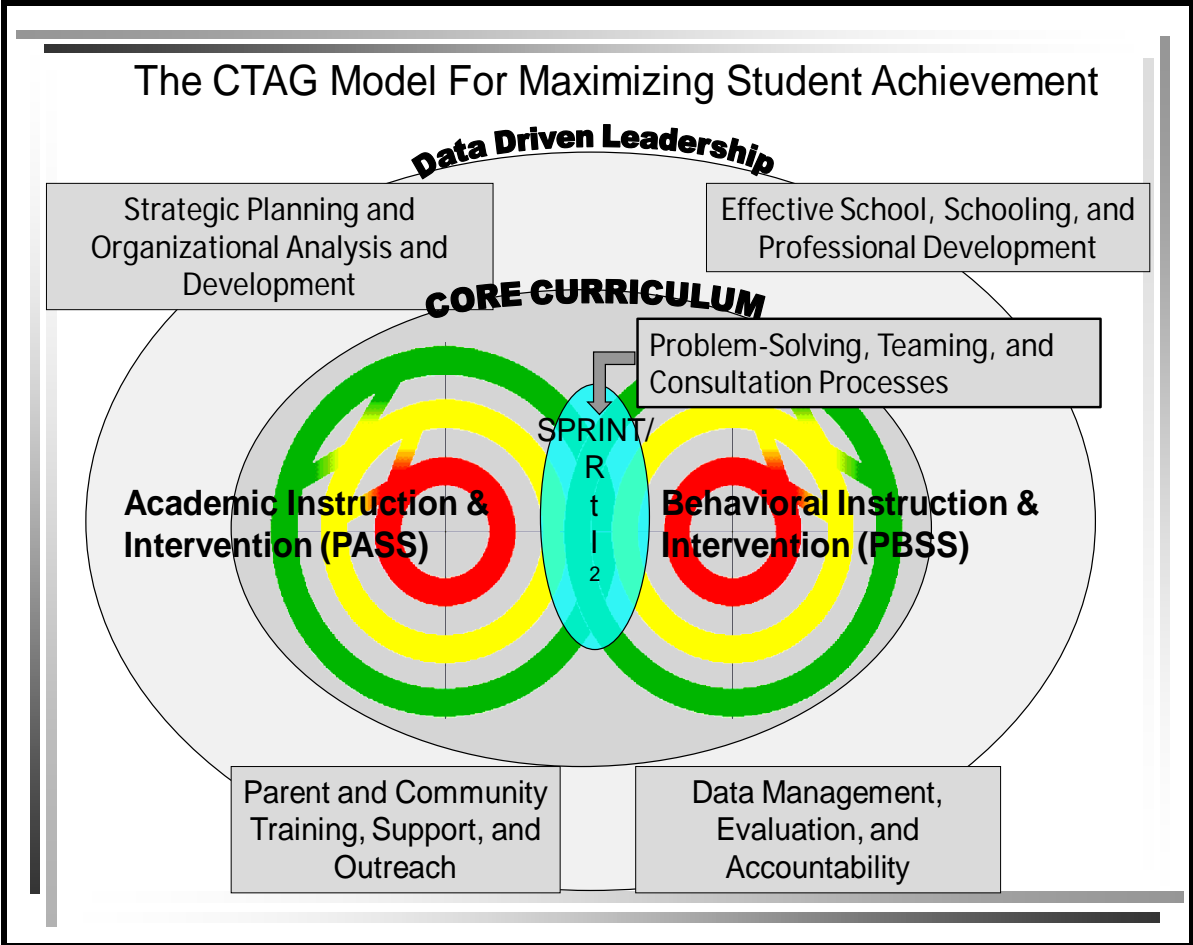


Figure 1.

## **Section II: A Model Implementation Guide for School or District SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Processes**

### **Introduction**

The ultimate goal of the School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team (SPRINT)/Response-to-Instruction and Response-to-Intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) process is to maximize the academic and social, emotional, and behavioral learning, progress, and proficiencies of all students. While this looks different at different age/grade levels, this results in students who are successful independent learners and effective self-managers (see Figure 2 and 3 below). This is accomplished when teachers, supported by other staff and administrators, effectively use scientifically-based curricula and instructional procedures to help students master academic and social, emotional, and behavioral skills. A significant portion of this mastery involves students' ability to use and apply their knowledge and skills more and more independently to new learning situations.

When students “do not respond” to effective instruction (for academics) and classroom management (for behavior) procedures, teachers need to determine—using a systematic, data-based process—why this is occurring and decide how to get students “back on track.” This lack of student “response to instruction” most often occurs when:

- Students are not learning and mastering information or skills;
- Their speed of mastery (or skill acquisition) is not as fast as typical/other students;
- They are having difficulty applying or “transferring” knowledge or skills;
- Specific emotional circumstances or conditions are impeding skill acquisition, mastery, or transfer; or
- They are not motivated to learn, or they are not held accountable for learning.

All of these reasons or “hypotheses” certainly involve the student, but they may also involve the teaching/instructional process in the classroom, or even the choice or use of the curriculum (e.g., the texts or materials) during instruction.

## **A Definition of “Independent Learning”**

### **A Successful Independent Learner:**

- **Is engaged, confident, motivated, and aware of when s/he understands and does not understand**
- **Knows how to create and sustain positive and productive learning environments**
- **Learns and masters—and has learned and mastered—specific facts, pieces of information, and skills; is able to organize, synthesize, and apply them to solve (real world) problems; and is able to communicate the information and/or solutions**
- **Is able to utilize resources to enhance learning or to close knowledge, skill, or application gaps**

Figure 2.

## **A Definition of “Self-Competency” or “Self-Management”**

### **Self-Competence/Management involves:**

A child or adolescent’s ability to:

- **Be socially, emotionally, and behaviorally aware of themselves and others**
- **Demonstrate successful interpersonal, social problem solving, conflict prevention and resolution, and social-emotional coping and behavioral skills**
- **Effectively control their own emotions and behavior**

Figure 3.

## **The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Process**

The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process involves two primary components.

**Component 1: The Data-Based Functional Assessment Problem-Solving Process.** The problem solving process determines why a student is not responding to effective instruction and classroom management. This problem-solving process is a universal process that is used by everyone in a school when there is a concern about a specific student or group of students. That is, it is used by individual classroom teachers, grade level (at the elementary level) or instructional teams of teachers (at the secondary level) who are all teaching the same student(s), or a building level team of multidisciplinary professionals. There are a number of possible “instructional teams” of teachers at the secondary level. For example, there may be instructional teams of teachers who are teaching the same (or predominantly the same) groups of students (e.g., the eighth grade team or “house”) or who are teaching in the same academic area (e.g., departments), who are gathered to discuss a specific student or group of students because they all have them in class.

**Component 2: SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Teams.** The teaming process involves the use of different staff and/or teams that apply the problem-solving process to address a specific student situation. For example, when a student situation is confusing, complex, or problematic, or when a teacher’s independent use of the problem-solving process has not been successful, a Grade-level (at the elementary level) or Instructional-level (at the secondary level) SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team should be available in every school. For even more complex cases, a multi-disciplinary Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team also should be available. This way, the teacher receives collegial consultation at the Grade or Instructional Team level, and multidisciplinary consultation at the Building Team level. This consultation is focused on analyzing why the student is not responding so that changes in instruction or the implementation of interventions can occur resulting in student progress and success.

## **The Goal of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Process**

The goal of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process (see Figure 4 below) is to determine why a student is having academic or social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties, and linking the reasons to early, intensive, and successful instructional or intervention approaches that occur, as much as possible, in the general education classroom (or the setting where the difficulty is occurring). When teacher-generated and implemented interventions are not successful for a specific student, the teacher can work with his or her Grade- or Instructional-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> or Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team to complete more strategic or intensive assessments that link to instructional or intervention services, supports, programs or strategies to help the student succeed. At each stage, the student’s “response to instruction or intervention” determines whether the data-based functional assessment and intervention process continues or not (see Figures 5 and 6 below).



## RtI<sup>2</sup>- Response-to-Instruction/ Intervention: A Definition. . .

- A broad-based, targeted process to evaluate a student's response to instruction/intervention
  - \* The focus should be on (EARLY, EFFECTIVE, and ADAPTIVE) INSTRUCTION/INTERVENTION.
  - \* The DESIRED OUTCOMES, through the instruction/intervention, determine the evaluation methods and data to be collected (i.e., the RESPONSE)
  - \* The collected data (indicating the outcome and the student's response) demonstrates whether the instruction/intervention WORKED or DID NOT WORK.

## Where Does Response-to- Instruction/Intervention RtI<sup>2</sup> Start?

- RtI starts in the general education classroom with evidence-based curricula taught by Highly Qualified Teachers using effective instructional practices
- RtI involves determining students' mastery of material and response to classroom management through effective assessments and progress monitoring
- When students are not successful over time, RtI is a component of a problem-solving process that determines why success has not occurred and what to do about it



Figures 4 and 5.

## Where Does Response-to-Instruction/Intervention RtI<sup>2</sup> Go?

- ◆ For students who are not responding to high quality instruction and teacher-initiated interventions over time, the problem-solving process becomes more formal as (a) functional assessments are completed, (b) resulting in more intensive classroom-based interventions, (c) where student progress is monitored more frequently, and (d) data is used to determine the success of the interventions or the need for more intensive services.
- ◆ More specialized, multidisciplinary resources are used to deliver more specialized interventions to produce improved child outcomes
- ◆ The intensity of services delivered are driven by student outcomes!!

Figure 6.

### **Component 1: The Data-based Functional Assessment Problem Solving Process**

The data-based problem solving is the glue underlying the entire SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process, whether applied at the teacher/classroom, grade, or building levels. The Data-based Problem Solving process (see Figure 7 below) involves, at the very least, the following fluid and overlapping steps or stages:

- (a) Problem Identification (or definition),
- (b) Problem (or functional) Analysis,
- (c) Intervention, and
- (d) Evaluations of Intervention effectiveness.

The Problem Identification, and the beginning of the Problem Analysis, steps begin as teachers complete a Comprehensive Student History and Record Review for the student of concern. This Review documents the student's social and developmental, medical, attendance, academic achievement and progress, disciplinary, and classroom-based intervention, and other "special services" histories. This Review provides a snap-shot of the student's prior successes and struggles, strengths and weaknesses, resources and support systems, limitations and gaps, and other possible factors contributing to the area(s) of concern. This Review also identifies information that is relevant and known, information that is relevant and unknown, and information that is irrelevant to the current concern.

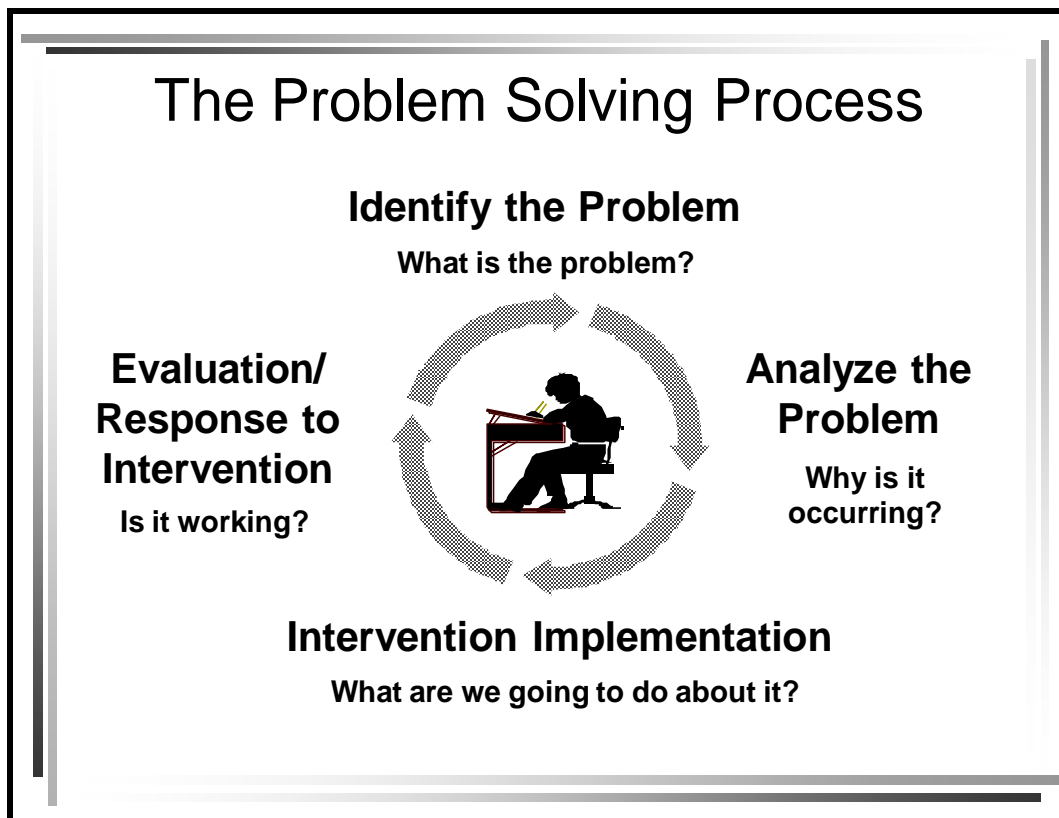


Figure 7. Source: Iowa Department of Education, 1998/  
Heartland Area Educational Agency, 2005

Defining the Problem. The Functional Assessment/Problem Analysis step focuses on determining why a student is not making academic or behavioral progress. For example, is it due to student-specific factors, teacher-instructional factors, and/or curricular factors? Once identified and validated, assessment results are directly linked to high probability of success and evidence- or research-based interventions. It must be emphasized that students’ difficulties, as much as possible, should be functionally analyzed in the environments wherein they exist. Similarly, the interventions should be implemented in those same settings, with consultation and other supports as needed.

Developing and Implementing the Plan. Interventions are best implemented through a written Academic or Behavioral Intervention Plan. A formal Academic or Behavioral Intervention Plan contains the following sections: (a) specific goals, objectives, and short- and long-term outcomes; (b) interventions, their implementation methods and timelines, and the resources (including training) needed during implementation; (c) evaluation strategies, including those to validate treatment integrity, along with who will complete them and when they will occur; and (d) decision rules or criteria indicating a successful resolution of “the problem.”

Evaluating the Plan. The ultimate goal of any intervention or intervention program is (a) to help students to be successful in the general education classroom and curricula (with as few modifications as possible), and (b) to help them to be largely responsible for managing (i.e., implementing, monitoring, and evaluating) their own success. To accomplish this, all interventions need to be outcome-based and formatively evaluated to track students' progress over time. In addition, at the end of a school year, or when an intervention is successful, summative evaluations should be conducted, summarized, and recorded in a student's cumulative folder or records.

**Data-based Problem Solving from Teacher, to Grade- or Instructional-Level to Building-Level Team**

Data-based Problem Solving occurs throughout the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process (see Figure 8 below). As noted above, when students do not respond to well-designed lessons, effective instruction, and supportive classroom environments, the data-based problem solving process becomes more focused, formal, and intensive. When this occurs, the use of a Grade- or Instructional-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team is recommended to guide the next level of functional assessment and intervention. If a student still is not responding after the interventions generated through the Grade-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process have been effectively implemented (or when it is evident that a critical or intensive situation exists), the multidisciplinary, Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team gets involved. Members of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team should include the best academic and behavioral intervention specialists in or available to the school building.

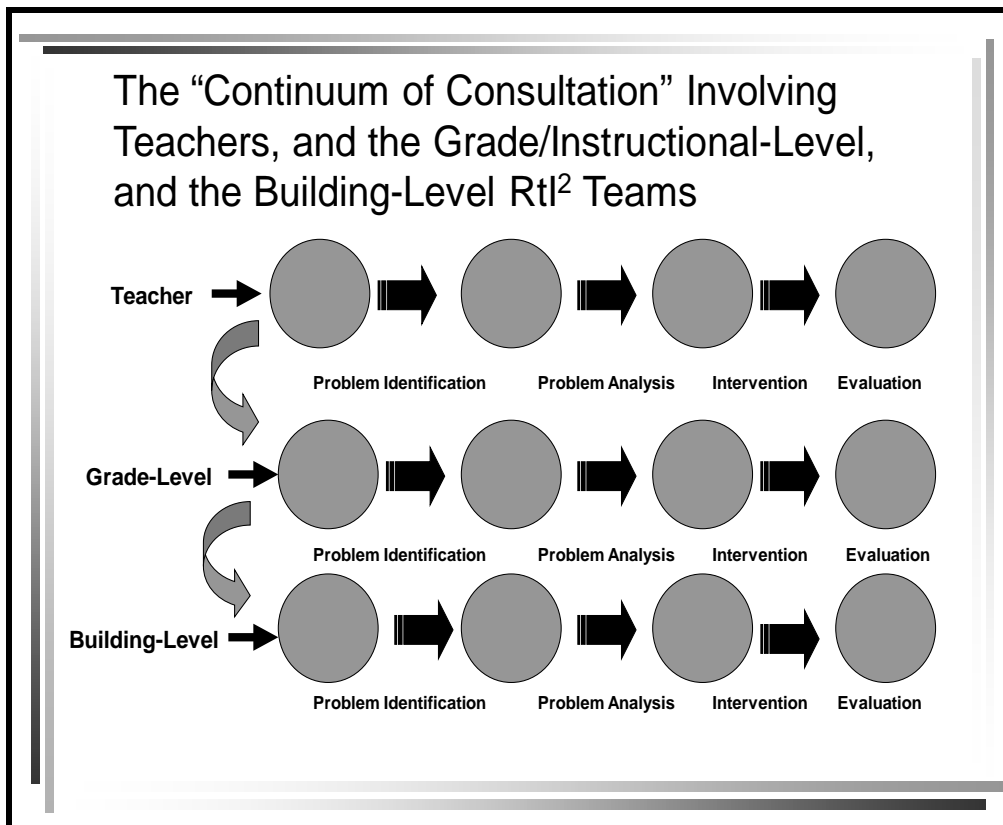


Figure 8.

When needed, all “referrals” to a Grade- or Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team are referrals for problem solving. The goal of the process is not to initiate testing to determine a student’s eligibility for special education services. The goal is to identify the best consultant(s) to work with the classroom teacher in the functional assessment and/or instructional/intervention areas needed to address the student challenge. Given this, the focus of the problem-solving process is on the interactions within the “instructional environment”—not just on the individual student of concern.

The Instructional Environment consists of the student, the academic and/or behavioral curricula, and the teacher/instructional characteristics or factors that help students to be academically or behaviorally successful (see Figure 9 below). These three domains are targeted during the functional assessment process because, when a student is unsuccessful or non-responsive in a classroom, the problem typically can be linked to one or more of these domains. Indeed, students often are unsuccessful due to situations or circumstances within one, two, or a combination of all three of these domains. For example, a student’s lack of academic or behavioral success may be due to: (a) student-specific factors; (b) ineffective teaching (as specifically related to the student-in-need) or instruction; (c) poorly matched (to the student) curricula or materials; or (d) some combination of two or three of these domains, respectively.

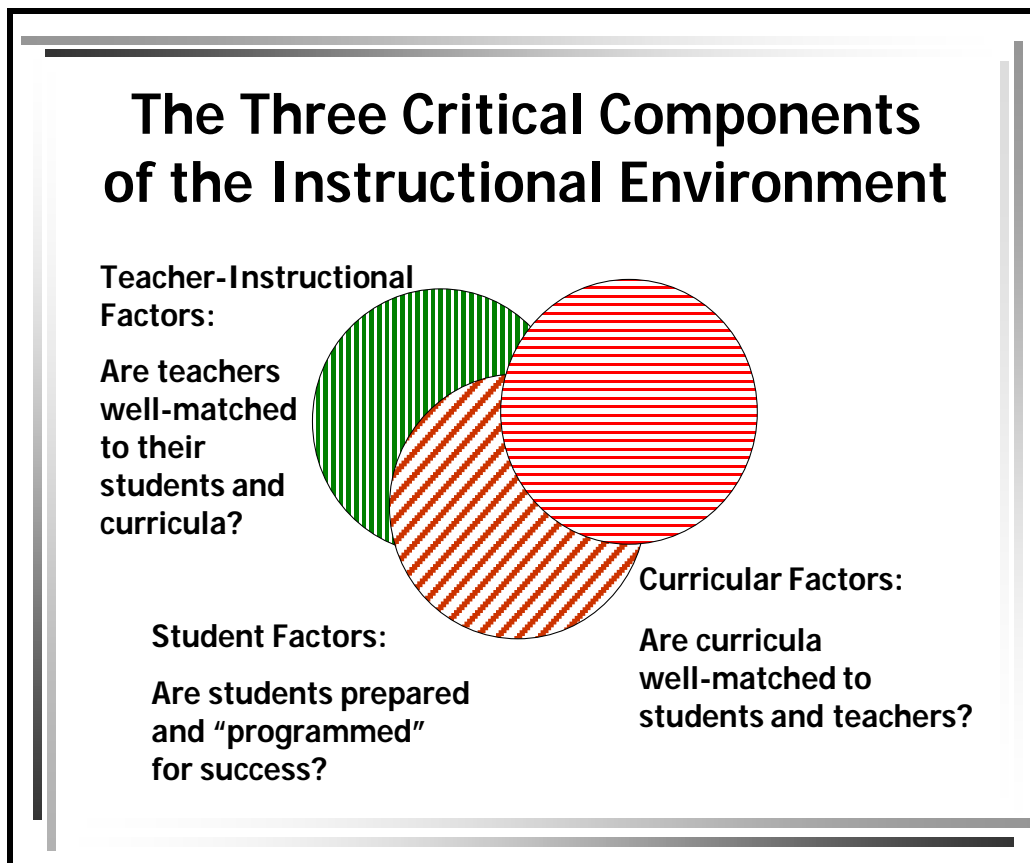


Figure 9. Source: Project ACHIEVE Press, 2005 as adapted from Rosenfield, 1987.

Significantly, regardless of the primary reasons for a student’s lack of academic or behavioral progress, interventions are almost always implemented within the student’s Instructional Environment (typically, the general education classroom). Thus, even if a student’s difficulties are largely student-specific, the intervention process still will require all three of the Instructional Environment domains—that is, the involvement of teachers (sometimes supported by consultants), working with students, using some instructional and/or intervention process that addresses and/or changes the academic or behavioral problem or concern.

### **The Importance of Consultation to Successful Problem Solving**

Consultation is an essential complement to the problem-solving and intervention processes. When a teacher is unsure of or does not know how to help a student in academic or behavioral need, or if a student is not responding to teacher-generated interventions or changes in instruction, the teacher (like the primary care physician who is unsure of the medical treatment needed for a confusing case) should seek out a formal or informal consultation with a colleague who has recognized skills in the area of concern. When a student demonstrates a significant level of non-performance or a persistent lack of response to interventions tried, a formal Grade-level or Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team referral/consultation is necessary.

Whether formal or informal, the goals of consultation are to:

- (a) Facilitate the successful completion of data-based functional assessment and problem solving;
- (b) Identify and implement successful, strategic interventions that solve the presenting situation that was “referred;”
- (c) Increase the current assessment and intervention skill level of the teacher (and any other professionals) involved in the case; and
- (d) Enhance the teacher’s (and others’) skills relative to future functional assessment, problem solving, and intervention with similar or related cases or situations.

As interventions are identified, implemented, and successful, teachers and other staff should be learning why they were selected, what they need to be implemented effectively, and why they were successful with the student of concern. They also should understand how the interventions could be used successfully for other academic or behavioral concerns and/or with other types of students in the future. Moreover, the teachers (and other staff) should increase their functional assessment, problem solving, and intervention skills and competence over time, including their ability to use these skills more independently and more quickly to identify student difficulties and to facilitate their resolution.

Finally, relative to the availability of consultation, it must be emphasized that every staff person is a potential consultant for someone else in their school or district. To this end, every school should create a “School Resource or Consultant Directory” so that everyone is aware of the skills of every individual in the school. In addition, every district should create a “District Resource or Consultant Directory” outlining the skills and expertise of district-level personnel. These directories should be shared across the district and its schools so students with specific challenges can be matched with the best expertise available in a school or district.

## **Component 2: Grade-Level and Building-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Teams and How They Work**

In order to facilitate the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> and data-based functional assessment problem-solving process, two formal teams should be used in every school: the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team and the Grade- or Instructional-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team. The Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team is a formal, school-level committee that meets, typically, on a weekly basis. As noted earlier, this team is comprised of the best academic and behavioral intervention specialists in or available to the school. The following individuals are typically on the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team:

- Building Principal
- SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Chairperson
- School Counselor
- School Social Worker
- School Psychologist
- Behavior Intervention Specialist
- Academic/Instructional Intervention Consultants
- Selected Special Education Teachers
- Speech Pathologist (as appropriate)
- School Nurse
- School-based Mental Health Specialists (if present in the school)
- Others as desired

At the elementary school level, the Grade-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team includes all of the general education teachers who are teaching at the same grade level, and one representative of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team who is assigned to and meets with a specific grade level for the entire school year. At the secondary school level, this team is more strategically organized as a function of the staff who are teaching at different grade levels. As noted earlier, the secondary Instructional-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team may be a group of teachers who are largely teaching the same students during the course of the day, or it may be a group of teachers all of whom are working with a specific student that one or more teachers are concerned about.

Grade- or Instructional-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meetings are useful because not every student, who is non-responsive to effective classroom instruction or behavior management, has problem analysis issues that are so complex, or instructional or intervention needs that are so intensive, that they need to involve the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team. Thus, the Grade- or Instructional-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process and meeting gives same-grade or instructional team teachers the opportunity to provide collegial consultation to a peer who has been unable to successfully resolve a student's academic or behavioral challenges. Critically, this assistance may occur at any step of the problem-solving process—problem identification, problem analysis, intervention, or evaluation.

## **The Responsibilities and Training of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Teams**

Below is a recommended Mission, Role, and Function description for a Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team.

### **Charge/Mission of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team**

“When students demonstrate ongoing and/or persistent academic and/or behavioral difficulties that are not responding to classroom-based problem solving, functional assessment, and interventions, the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process is used to address these circumstances through more intensive, multidisciplinary action. The Building-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team’s primary responsibility is to oversee this more intensive problem-solving, consultation, and intervention process—whether at a grade-level or at the building-level, such that all students in need receive early intervening services as much as possible in the general education classroom through their regular classroom teacher(s). The Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team also evaluates referrals for problem-solving over time to identify referral trends, preventative strategies, and professional development needs so that teachers are prepared to provide strategic instructional and/or intervention services, supports, programs, or strategies and/or to support these approaches at an intensive level to students in need.

The Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team, depending on state or district policy, also may be responsible for tracking the number and type of students receiving 504 accommodations and special education/IEP services, for coordinating manifestation and other discipline-related assessments for individual students, and for evaluating the school’s success relative to the state-monitored “special education triggers” (e.g., LRE, disproportionality, AYP, graduation and drop-out rates).”

### **Primary Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes**

1. To oversee the implementation of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process in the school, including (a) its adherence to federal, state, and district policies and procedures; (b) the identification and provision of relevant professional development and technical assistance; (c) the creation or review of needed forms, data bases, data collection or evaluation instruments, or other progress monitoring tools; and (d) ongoing and needed community and family outreach activities.
2. To provide timely problem-solving/functional assessment, consultation, and early intervention services, at the grade- and building-levels.
3. To track the progress of existing student interventions, both individually and collectively.



4. To identify academic and behavioral trends and plan targeted professional development opportunities to help (a) individual students make successful progress in targeted areas, and (b) school staff increase their skills so that they can respond earlier and more independently to similar student problems in the future.
5. To facilitate the communication and consistency, across staff, in the implementation and use of strategic interventions, and to ensure that interventions and “lessons learned” about students are transferred, systematically and in a timely way, across relevant staff members from one school year to the next.
6. To collect and report both individual student and student group data so that (a) the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process is formatively and summatively evaluated, (b) it maximizes all students’ academic and behavioral progress and skill mastery, (c) the school meets and/or adheres to all ESEA and IDEA requirements and mandates, and (d) the strengths of the process are maintained and the weaknesses of the process are addressed.

### **Year-at-a-Glance Agenda for a Monthly Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Meeting**

Even though the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Building-level team meets on a weekly basis to address new student cases and to review those in process, the team also should devote part of one or more weekly meetings each month to the activities below. These activities help to maintain effective underlying SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> processes, and they assist the team in making sure that annual goals, objectives, and outcomes are being evaluated on an ongoing and conscious basis.

During APRIL: Assign new SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> members (if necessary) to the team for the next school year; Choose a new Team Chair and Secretary/Recorder (if necessary).

While other school-level committees will have their grade-level and other members periodically rotating on and off (usually after having served a three-year term), the membership of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team is more stable. Thus, the team rarely gets new members, and the Chair of the team may serve for several years—typically, due to his or her professional position in the school (e.g., the School Counselor).

During APRIL-JUNE: Hold at least six SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meetings with both out-going team members and in-coming team members in attendance.

Holding these combined meetings allows in-coming members to observe and participate in a number of cases, before the end of the school year. This helps them to become acquainted with team members, procedures, and the variety of cases that the team typically considers. This experience also helps new members to assume their roles and responsibilities more easily when out-going team members are no longer present at the beginning of the next school year.

During APRIL-JUNE: Conduct various “Articulation Activities” to help the team plan the transition to the new school year. One of the activities needs to focus on completing a Summative Evaluation of SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team goals, objectives, and outcomes written into the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> section of the School Improvement Plan. Among the Articulation Activities needed are the following:

- Complete and Analyze the Consultation Referral Audit
- Conduct a SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Forms Analysis and update or prepare any needed Forms
- Facilitate the “Get-Go” Review Process of the students considered at the Grade- or Instructional-level and Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> teams as well as, students on IEPs or 504 Plans, and other students as appropriate
- Participate in the Academic Achievement Audit
- Facilitate the writing of the Student Briefing Reports

During the AUGUST STAFF PRE-PLANNING TIME (The staff preparation days immediately prior to the beginning of the new school year): The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team should have its first team meeting of the new school year during this time period. It also should review or update the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process with the entire faculty, providing training on any new policies, procedures, or forms.

During SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER: Hold weekly SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meetings.

During NOVEMBER: Conduct a Formative Evaluation of the team’s progress relative to the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team goals, objectives, and outcomes in the current School Improvement Plan, and conduct a Planning Meeting to identify and coordinate all SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team activities for the next four months.

During DECEMBER-JANUARY: Hold weekly SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meetings.

During FEBRUARY: During (or completed by) this month, the team should draft the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> (i.e., early intervening, SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup>, and strategic/intensive intervention needs) section for the next School Improvement Plan (SIP). As with any SIP section, this should include Goals, Objectives, Resources, Funding, Activities, Timelines, Outcomes, and Evaluation Procedures, and it should be submitted to the School Improvement Team for review.

During **MARCH**: Conduct a Formative Evaluation of the team’s progress relative to the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> goals, objectives, and outcomes in the current School Improvement Plan, and conduct a Planning Meeting to identify and coordinate all SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team activities for the next four months.

### **A Step-by-Step SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Process: From Classroom to Building-level Support**

Below is a step-by-step blueprint of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process, beginning with a student having academic or social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties with a teacher, and proceeding up to the involvement of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team, eventually focusing on the steps within a SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting. A flow chart diagramming this process is provided to complement this description (see Figure 10 below). As noted, this is a blueprint. When using this flow chart, teachers and others need to use their professional judgment, making sure that students receive needed instruction, assessments, interventions, and services relative to their academic and behavioral progress, and any concerns that develop in specific areas.

As teachers and others proceed through this process, they should consult as needed with administrators, Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team members, and other colleagues to decide which steps are best for specific situations.

#### **Step 1 [Tier 1]. Effective Classroom Instruction and Behavior Management.**

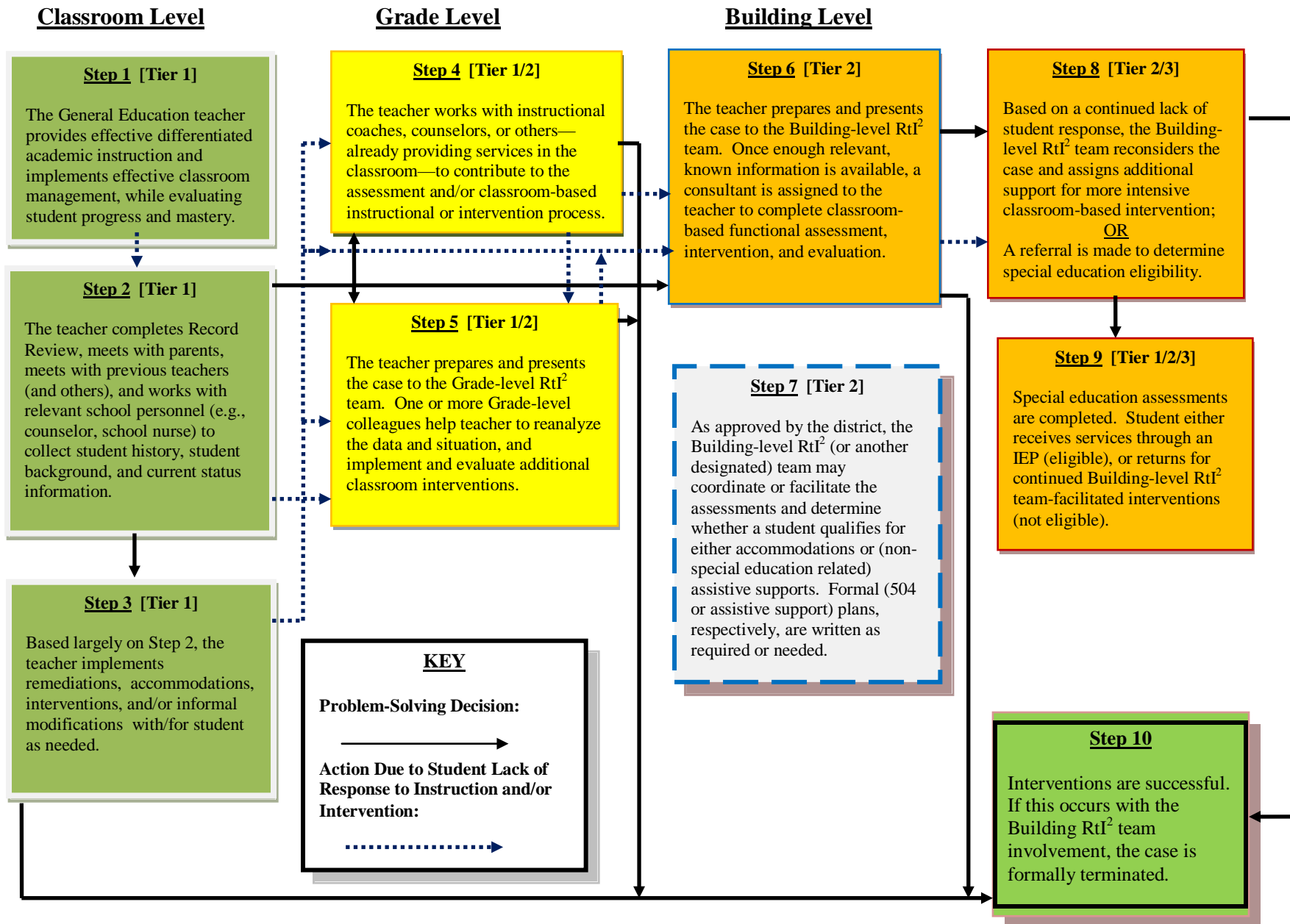
When developing classroom lessons, every general education teacher analyzes (a) the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes of a specific academic or behavioral unit or lesson; (b) his or her teaching or instructional approaches; and (c) the learning history, status, and styles of the students in his/her classroom to develop the best ways to differentiate and teach the unit or lesson to maximize student learning and mastery. The general education teacher teaches the lesson(s), assesses student learning, and monitors students’ mastery and speed of mastery over time.

#### **Step 2 [Tier 1]. Collecting Historical Information and Determining the Student’s Current Skill Levels and Status.**

For those students who are not consistently learning and demonstrating proficiency, and/or for those exhibiting social, emotional, or behavioral concerns, the teacher needs to take the following steps (see also Figure 11):

- Complete a Cumulative Record Review on the student (see **Appendix/Form D**). This involves information on the schools attended by the student and his/her yearly attendance; student grades and test scores; services, supports, and previous interventions; medical, health, and family history; social, emotional, behavioral, and school discipline history; and other important factors related to the student’s school functioning.

**Figure 10: A Model SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Implementation Process/Flow-Chart for a School**



- Interview the parents/guardians, last year’s teacher or teaching team, previous years’ teachers or support personnel, and anyone else of relevance to discuss the student’s strengths, weaknesses, development, and progress—especially as it relates to the areas of concern. **All parent contacts should be documented on a Parent Communication/Contact Log (see Appendix/Form II).**

**Initial Problem Identification Steps**

- ❖ **Determine the Student’s Current Classroom Status:  
Academic/Behavioral Progress and Work Samples  
Scope & Sequence Checklist (academic concern)  
Behavioral Checklist (academic and behavioral concern)**
- ❖ **Consider, Describe, and Quantify Initial Concerns**
- ❖ **Review of Records**
- ❖ **Parent Contact(s)/Interview(s)– Determine Need for  
Social-Developmental History**
- ❖ **Previous Teacher/Other Interview(s)**
- ❖ **Consult with Medical Personnel/Discount the Medical**
- ❖ **Classroom Observations**

Figure 11.

- Determine (with other teachers, consultants, or school personnel, as needed) the current, functional academic and behavioral status of the student. This involves identifying the academic and behavioral skills that the student has mastered (regardless of the “grade level placement or designation” of those skills), the current instructional level of the student, and the student’s “frustration” level—that level where material is currently too difficult for the student.

- Determine the need for social, developmental, or medical assessments of the student—decisions that may involve other school personnel (e.g., the school nurse, counselor, school social worker or psychologist). Such assessments may include: (a) a formal Social-Developmental History or Assessment, and/or (b) Health Screenings, Medical Check-ups, or other Diagnostic Assessments. In this latter area, it is important to identify (or discount) the impact of any student-specific medical, physiological, neurological, biochemical, or other issues that exist and may be affecting students' academic or behavioral status or progress.

**Please Note: This step may require an updated Vision or Hearing Screening by the school nurse, or a referral—through the parents—for a medical check-up or diagnostic assessment by a primary care physician and/or medical specialist.**

As a result of the information collected, the teacher decides if s/he can independently complete the functional assessment problem solving process to determine why the student is exhibiting the identified concerns (using Appendix III as a guide). At this point, the teacher moves ahead with an instructional adaptation (Step 3), or decides that more assistance is needed to complete either the functional assessment and/or intervention process. Depending on the teacher's assessment of the assistance needed, s/he may move to Step 4, 5, or 6.

**DECISION POINT: Based on the results of Step 2, a decision is made to proceed to Step 3, Step 4, Step 5, or Step 6. In most cases, the teacher should proceed to Step 3 below.**

**Step 3 [Tier 1]. Remediation, Intervention, Accommodations, and/or Informal Modifications.** For those students who are not mastering curricular or behavioral skills or material, the teacher can use the data and information from Step 2 and provide, as indicated, one or more of the classroom-based adaptations below:

- Remediations of specific prerequisite or primary skills that the student has not mastered or is having difficulty transferring or applying;
- Interventions to teach a new skill, build fluency or automaticity in a skill, or facilitate the transfer of existing skills to a new application or situation;
- Informal accommodations that change specific learning conditions for the student—for example, changes in how instruction is presented in the classroom setting that involve the use of support equipment or materials, ways that the student is required to respond to classroom instruction or assignments, the timing or scheduling of instruction or assignments; or
- Informal modifications of the curricula, instructional material, or related instructional approaches that adapt but do not reduce learning expectations.

These academic or behavioral adaptations are largely planned, implemented, and evaluated by the classroom teacher with or without informal consultation (e.g., a grade-level colleague or school-level consultant). Once again, the need for one or more of these adaptations has been validated through the data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process. The teacher needs to collect and document all of the diagnostic data that determine the need for, and that evaluate the results of the adaptations implemented (see/use **Appendix/Form IV**).

**DECISION POINT:** If the student still is not responding, academically or behaviorally, a decision is made to proceed to Step 4, Step 5, or Step 6. In most cases, the teacher should proceed to Step 4 below.

**Step 4 [Tier 1/2]. Consultation and Classroom-based or Classroom-focused Instruction or Intervention Services, Supports, Strategies, or Programs.** With the information from Step 2, and the documentation and data from Step 3, the classroom teacher may consult and/or work with other colleagues who are already providing services in the classroom to some or all of the students. The consultations may focus on additional assessments to further understand a student's difficulties, and/or classroom-based instructional or intervention approaches. These consultants include:

For Academic Concerns: Teacher colleagues, Instructional Facilitators,  
Special Education Teachers

For Behavioral Concerns: Counselors, Social Workers, School Psychologists,  
Special Education Teachers

As this consultative support is provided, the data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process continues to be used as the teacher and consultant(s):

- Re-analyze the conditions, circumstances, or problems that may be impacting the specific student;
- Identify and validate the reason(s) for the student's difficulties; and
- Plan, implement, and evaluate the interventions needed by the student (as determined by the functional assessment).

These activities involve collegial consultation, and the student's parents or guardians are re-appraised of the situation, the student's lack of response to previous classroom adaptations, and to the teacher's ongoing efforts. The teacher needs to collect and document all outcome data that occur as a result of these interventions (see/use **Appendix/Form IV**).

If the assessments completed above indicate a problem of such immediacy or complexity, the teacher and consultant should proceed directly either to Step 5 or Step 6.

**DECISION POINT:** If the student still is not responding, academically or behaviorally, a decision is made to proceed to Step 5 or Step 6. In most cases, the case should proceed to Step 5 below.

**Step 5 [Tier 1/2]. Grade-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Meeting.** With all of the information, documentation, and data collected thus far, the teacher gets on his/her Grade-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team's meeting agenda, updates his/her Record Review information and form, and prepares and presents the case (see the section below on the Case Review Meeting).

Based on the case review, the teacher receives additional classroom-based functional assessment and intervention assistance/consultation from one or more colleagues on the team. Again, guided by the data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process, the teacher and grade-level consultant(s):

- Re-analyze the conditions, circumstances, or problems that may be impacting the specific student;
- Identify and validate the reason(s) for the student's difficulties; and
- Plan, implement, and evaluate the interventions needed by the student (as determined by the functional assessment).

The teacher needs to collect and document all outcome data that occur as a result of these interventions (see/use Appendix/Form V).

**DECISION POINT:** If the student still is not responding, academically or behaviorally, a decision is made to proceed to Step 6 or Step 8. In most cases, the case should proceed to Step 6 below.

**REMINDER--GRADE RETENTION:** If a teacher is considering a student for grade retention, this process (depending on Board policy) may begin as early as December as the teacher advises the Building Principal and, perhaps, the Chair of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team about that possibility.



**Step 6 [Tier 2]. Building-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Meeting.** With all of the information, documentation, and data collected thus far, the teacher gets on the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team’s meeting agenda, updates his/her Record Review information and form, and prepares and presents the case (see the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Problem Solving Meeting section below).

When this SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team determines that there is enough “Relevant/Known” information (again, see the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Problem Solving Meeting section below), the teacher is formally assigned a SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Consultant who will work with the teacher in the classroom to formally complete the data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process. At this point, the teacher and SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Consultant formally:

- Analyze the conditions, circumstances, or problems that may be impacting the specific student;
- Identify and validate the reason(s) for the student’s difficulties; and
- Plan, implement, and evaluate the interventions needed by the student (as determined by the functional assessment).

When the intervention(s) is (are) identified, the teacher and SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Consultant must complete the Building-level Intervention Plan (see **Appendix/Form VI**) prior to implementing the intervention. All outcome data resulting from all phases of intervention are collected, documented, and entered into the Building-level Intervention Plan.

If progress or success does not occur at the strategic instruction or intervention level (i.e., there is an ongoing or continued lack of “student response”), the teacher and SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Consultant may meet again with the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team. At this point, the case is reconsidered, along with all of the intervention-related information and data collected thus far. Based on the case review, the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team may assign additional consultants and/or resources to continue the assessment and intervention process at a more intensive level.

**Step 7 [Tier 2]. Developing a 504 Accommodation or Assistive Support Plan.**

When indicated by the data and information collected, a teacher, consultant, or Grade-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team may refer a student to the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team asking them to consider the need either for (a) a 504 accommodation plan for the student, and/or (b) non-special education-related assistive supports. The use of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team in either of these areas is a district decision. If allowed, the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team proceeds with the referral and appropriate assessments by the relevant professionals are conducted, often as an extension of the data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process. As appropriate, 504 or Assistive Support plans are written and implemented based on the results of the respective assessments.

**Note well:** Some districts, due to state or district, may utilize different procedures and/or a different team of experts to guide these 504 or assistive support processes. In addition, these processes may be considered either Tier 1 or Tier 2 services or supports in some districts.

**Step 8 [Tier 3]. Referral for Assessments to Determine Special Education Eligibility.** Based on the student's lack of response to the interventions implemented by the teacher and the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Consultant(s), the teacher and consultant meet again with the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team. At this point, the case is reconsidered, along with all of the intervention-related information and data collected thus far. At this point, the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team may decide to make a referral to have the student evaluated for eligibility as a student with a disability (such that more intensive services, supports, and/or interventions, under the provisions of an IEP, can be provided).

**Step 9 [Tier 3]. Eligibility Confirmed; Services Provided through an IEP.** After confirming the acceptability of the referral, the Special Education Assessment and Eligibility Team coordinates and/or completes the assessments needed to determine whether a student qualifies for academic and/or behavioral services as guided by an IEP under the IDEA. In order to facilitate seamless communication, coordination, collaboration, and use of the data and information collected and analyzed thus far, it is beneficial when the Eligibility Team is a subset of the individuals on the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team.

If the student is eligible and in need of special education services, these services are coordinated with the general education program as well as any other “non-special education” (i.e., Tier, 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3) interventions needed by the student in areas other than his/her area of disability.

If the student does not qualify for special education, the case is returned to the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team for continued planning, implementation, and evaluation of the interventions or services still needed by the student.

**Step 10. Success and Termination.** The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup>'s data-based, functional assessment problem-solving process is formally discontinued when interventions are successful. When success occurs at any step other than the Building SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team level, the process is simply discontinued. When the case has been presented and processed at the Building SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup>-level (Step 6), that team should re-review and debrief the entire case, officially terminate it, and discontinue and conclude their involvement.

## **The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Problem Solving Meeting**

In Steps 5 or 6, the teacher goes to a Grade- or Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting to present and discuss his or her student-specific information, data, and concerns. This section will briefly outline the different phases or parts of the meeting, focusing primarily on the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting, then discussing how the format of the Grade-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting may differ.

**Goals of the Meeting.** While the long-term goal of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup>'s problem solving process is to develop and implement successful student and classroom interventions, **the goals of the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Problem Solving Meeting include the following:**

Goal 1. To share, with meeting participants, the historical information, existing data, and current status of the student of concern (i.e., the Current Student Status Profile). This is done at the beginning of the first Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting by the classroom teacher, who presents the information summarized on the Record Review Form.

Goal 2. To obtain additional, relevant information, from participants at the meeting, beyond that already collected during the Review of Existing Data and Records step, and to integrate and apply all of the data to the next steps of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process.

Goal 3. To use all the data collected, to clarify the initial classroom concerns resulting in a functionally descriptive, operational definition of the academic and/or overt behavior(s) of concern.

Goal 4. To determine if the student, during the current and past years, has received appropriate levels of effective instruction, and if any attendance, health, or mobility circumstances or conditions have affected his or her progress in the area of concern.

Goal 5. To determine what remediation, interventions, accommodations and/or modifications have already been attempted and to evaluate the treatment integrity and impact of those approaches.

Goal 6. To contribute to the (a) identification of student strengths and weaknesses, (b) determination of academic or behavioral gaps, and (c) initial functional assessment of the student concerns, including (d) the beginning generation of hypotheses to determine why they exist.

Goal 7. To determine if there is sufficient (Relevant/Known) information to proceed.

If there still are too many Relevant/Unknown questions and answers, the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team suspends the case review, decides who will collect what information, and determines when the team will reconvene to hear and consider the new data.

Goal 8. If there is sufficient information, the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team decides who is the best intervention-oriented consultant, in or available to the school, to work directly with the teacher to complete a comprehensive functional assessment, and to help design, implement, and evaluate strategic interventions.

**Steps during the Meeting.** When well-organized and prepared, cases presented to the Building-level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team during the New Case Review part of the meeting typically are discussed for thirty (30) minutes or less. Below are the steps in a single New Case Review (see also Figures 12 and 13):

Step 1. The classroom teacher bringing the student of concern to the table, “presents” the case by reading through or highlighting the information, sequentially, on the Cumulative Folder/Record Review form. This presentation includes the teacher’s description of classroom interventions that have been tried, along with their data and results. All of this typically takes approximately 8 to 12 minutes, and should be done without interruption.

Step 2. Anyone with direct experience, interactions, or information regarding the student or case shares it as succinctly as possible. This typically takes approximately 5 minutes.

Step 3. The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team clarifies and/or defines the problem and begins to identify existing skills gaps and replacement behaviors. This is typically done by the individual(s) on the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team who have the most expertise in the area(s) of concern, although anyone on the team can participate. This part of the meeting typically involves a series of “Questions and Answers” between members of the team and the classroom teacher (and others who have interacted in the classroom with the student and/or teacher).

Step 4. As questions from the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team are being answered, the meeting Recorder is documenting the “Relevant, Known,” “Relevant, Unknown,” and “Irrelevant” information that has been generated.

Ultimately, Steps 3 and 4 typically take approximately 10 minutes.

Step 5. If most of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team questions have been satisfactorily answered and a satisfactory level of relevant information is known, the team selects the best “Case Consultant,” in or available to the school, to work with the classroom teacher. After the meeting has concluded, this individual will work with the classroom teacher, in the settings wherein the student problem exists, to facilitate the more formal and complete data-based, functional assessment, problem solving process.

If the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team feels that there are too many relevant questions or pieces of information that are unknown, they can suspend the review and discussion of the case, decide who will collect the missing or unknown information, and determine when to reconvene to hear and consider the new data/information.

## Beginning the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Meeting

- **The Requesting Classroom Teacher presents the case guided by the Cumulative Folder Review form. (8 to 12 minutes without interruption)**
- **Other Team members share their information about the student/case**
- **The Team clarifies and defines the problem, identifying skill gaps and replacement behaviors.**

## The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Meeting Continues

- **“Relevant Known,” “Relevant Unknown,” and “Irrelevant” information is categorized.**
  - When there are too many “Relevant Unknowns”– Assign individuals to gather the information; Schedule a time to reconvene the Team**
  - When most information is “Relevant and Known”– Assign a SPRINT Consultant to work with the Teacher on functional assessment/intervention activities;**
- **Decide when the Team needs to review/receive updates on the case (Between 2 to 6 weeks).**

Figures 12 and 13.

Step 6. When the case has been assigned to an SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Case Consultant, the team decides when an update on the status/progress of the case will occur. Presented during the Consultant Case Review part of the SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> team meeting, an update of every case occurs at least once every six weeks, although the team can decide to receive an update more frequently. Thus, an update could occur after only one, two, three, four, or five weeks.

Typically, a case involving extreme conditions or circumstances is reviewed within two weeks of its New Case Review meeting. A case where the team wants feedback on the results of the functional assessment and the recommended interventions often is reviewed within three to four weeks of its New Case Review meeting. Finally, a more “routine” case or a case that may require more time to complete the functional assessment is likely to be reviewed within five or six weeks of its New Case Review meeting.

Ultimately, as the last steps of a New Case Review, Steps 5 and 6 typically take approximately 10 minutes.

### **Summary: The SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Process – Important Principles and Practices**

This guide has outlined a model SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> process a school or district could adopt, use, and/or integrate into its policies and procedures to guide its effective school and schooling activities for students demonstrating academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges. Embedded within this guide have been a number of important SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> principles and practices. They included the following:

- Students succeed academically and behaviorally because of the characteristics, actions, and activities within the Instructional Environment.
- All students receive scientifically- and/or research-based instruction to the greatest extent possible in general education settings using general education curricula.
- Instruction focuses on both academic achievement and mastery, and social, emotional, and behavioral self-management and competence. Instruction is differentiated to maximize students’ speed and degree of mastery.
- Student success is most facilitated within positive, safe, and supportive school settings and classroom environments.
- Students’ academic and behavioral progress is continually monitored in the classroom using authentic and other assessments to determine skill mastery, independence, and application.
- Assessments of student progress are reliable and valid, and they evaluate the functional and meaningful outcomes and proficiencies that relate to curricular, district, and state academic expectations.

- Teachers and others use classroom performance and progress monitoring data as the basis for all instructional decisions.
- When individual students are not making appropriate academic or behavioral progress, the presence of effective classroom instruction and classroom management is evaluated first before considering more intensive instruction or intervention.
- Teachers and others use a data-based functional assessment process when students are not responding to effective instruction or classroom management to determine whether (a) adapted classroom instruction (e.g., skill remediation, instructional accommodations and/or curricular modification), or (b) more targeted or specific classroom-based intervention is needed.
- When students do not respond to classroom-based instructional or intervention approaches, teachers and others use more intensive, multi-factored, multi-disciplinary data-based functional assessments to determine the need for more strategic or intensive services, supports, strategies, and/or programs. These assessments determine why the student challenge is occurring, and the outcomes are directly linked to the instruction or intervention needed.
- Collegial consultation is provided in the setting(s) where the situation or problem is occurring whenever possible.
- All instructional or intervention services are delivered, to the greatest degree possible, in general education settings or in the settings where the situations or problems are occurring in.
- Instruction/Intervention plans should be written prior to implementation, and they should include the methods and steps, resources and training, timelines and outcomes, and formative and summative evaluations needed for implementation integrity and success.
- Evaluations should be formative and summative and address both short- and long-term intervention goals and outcomes.

### **Section III/Appendix VII: Common SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Process Questions and Answers**

Appendix VII summarizes some of the essential points discussed throughout the sections above in a “Question and Answer” format. This appendix is often very useful when district and school leaders must answer some or all of these questions from staff, parents, or others. This appendix also might be used to begin or summarize a discussion as a district or school plans to design and implement a comprehensive SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> system.

## **Appendices/Forms**

Appendix/Form I:	Record Review Form
Appendix/Form II:	Parent Communication Log
Appendix/Form III:	Checklist of Possible Hypotheses to Explain Student Difficulties
Appendix/Form IV:	Classroom-Level Intervention Log
Appendix/Form V:	Grade-Level SPRINT/RtI <sup>2</sup> Team Intervention Log
Appendix/Form VI:	Building-Level SPRINT/RtI <sup>2</sup> Team Intervention Plan
Appendix VII:	Common SPRINT/RtI <sup>2</sup> Process Questions and Answers



**Appendix/Form I: Record Review Form**

**THE CUMULATIVE FOLDER/STUDENT  
RECORD REVIEW AND ANALYSIS FORM**

Student's Name:

Date of Birth:

Teacher's Name:

Grade Level:

Date of Request:

Chronological Age: \_\_\_yr \_\_\_mo

School:

---

1. Describe the reason(s) for referral?  
a. Academic Referral? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no  
Specify:

**(Note: If an academic referral, bring Progress Monitoring/Running Records/Other data/information)**

- b. Behavioral Referral? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no  
Specify:

2. What replacement behaviors would you like to see?

a. Academic:

b. Behavioral:

3. Have you presented this case to your grade level team?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If "yes", what interventions were suggested or what recommendations did the grade level team make?

4. Is this student age-appropriate for grade level? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

If NO, please specify why? Check all that apply.

- a. Retained (grade level \_\_\_)? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Started school late? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Held out of school? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Do Not Know Reason \_\_\_\_\_

5. What special services has this student received? Check all that apply.

Dates of service

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| a. No special services                             | _____ | _____ |
| b. Special Education Services:                     |       |       |
| Specific Learning Disability                       | _____ | _____ |
| Cognitively Disabled                               | _____ | _____ |
| Severely Emotionally Disturbed                     | _____ | _____ |
| If Special Ed, Resource ___ or Self-Contained ___? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Speech/Language                                 | _____ | _____ |
| d. Occupational Therapy                            | _____ | _____ |
| e. Preschool Education                             | _____ | _____ |
| f. Alternative/Opportunity School                  | _____ | _____ |
| g. Family Services                                 | _____ | _____ |
| h. Counseling (Be specific)                        | _____ | _____ |

If student has received special services, please specify when those services began and for how long were they delivered.

6. Outline the student's educational history:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>School Year</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>School</u>
Pre K	_____	_____	
Kinder	_____	_____	
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	_____	_____	

School Moves (Multiple Schools in One School Year)

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>School</u>
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	

Total Number of School Changes \_\_\_\_\_

7. Average academic and behavioral progress of the student. (Benchmark, achievement scores or report card grades may be used.)

<u>ACADEMIC</u>					
	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Language Arts</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>Social Studies</u>
<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>(Scores/Grades)</u>				
___	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__
___	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__
___	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__
___	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__
___	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__	_/__

**Behavior**

For Behavior, use Personal Conduct grades or descriptions (or the equivalent) that are on the Report or Report Card comments. Discipline referrals to the office may also be incorporated here.

Using the numbers 1-5 (1=never occurs to 5=occurs most or all the time) fill in the blanks for the listed behaviors. Check with the secretary for information on behavior referrals and previous teachers for assistance on prior years behavior.

<u>Grade Level</u>	Positive Attitude	Respect Authority	Completes Assignments	On Task	Speaks Approp.	Listens/Follows Directions
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**8. Unusual Health History that you feel might be related to this referral.**

Specify:

Do you think this student may have hearing problems? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no  
Do you think this student may have vision problems? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

(If you answered yes to either of the above question please contact the school nurse to arrange a vision and hearing screening. Be sure to attach a copy of this email to your form.)

Is this student taking any medication? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

(If yes, specify and include other significant aspects of the student's medication history, if available):

9. Attendance Record (Have the attendance clerk run a report and attach it to this form)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Days Absent</u>	<u>Days Tardy</u>
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___
___	/ ___	/ ___	/ ___

If there are a significant number of absences, do you know the reason? Please state.

10. What is, in your judgment, the instructional level of the student in each of the following areas?

<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Instructional Level</u> (Grade-level Equivalent in Years/Months)
Reading	_____
Language Arts	_____
Spelling	_____
Math	_____
Writing	_____

11. Please think about the referral problem(s) and the reason(s) why the problem might exist and why the replacement behavior has not occurred. Give your best judgment about which of these areas might be contributing to the problem. (See attached pages 1-4 to assist with answering the following questions)

1. What Child Characteristics might be related to the problem?

2. What Curricular issues might be related to the problem?

3. What Teacher/Instructional issues might be related to the problem?

4. What Classroom/Peer issues might be related to the problem?

5. What School/School District issues might be related to the problem?

6. What Home/Community issues might be related to the problem?



**Appendix/Form III:**

**Checklist of Possible Hypotheses to  
Explain Student Difficulties**

***I. Child Characteristics/Conditions***

**Hypothesis**

Cognitive Areas:

- Adequate/inadequate short and long-term memory (auditory, visual)
- Length of attention span
- Self-monitoring and self-management skills
- Self-control/Impulsivity (ability/inability to delay long enough to think/ behave)
- Ability/inability to integrate visual/motor/auditory tasks
- Presence/absence of prerequisite academic skills for task
- Cognitive/meta-cognitive ability and skills

Behavioral Areas:

- Self-control and self-management skills
- Attributions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes
- Social skills (interpersonal, problem-solving, conflict resolution skills)
- Adaptive behavior skills
- Academic engagement

Health Areas:

- Hearing, motor, vision skills
- Presence of specific health conditions
- Physical and motor (fine and gross) capacity
- Medication cycle not appropriate for school day/activities
- Side effects of medication
- Speech/language difficulties
- Metabolism
- Fatigue/persistence resulting in higher activity, less ability to focus, etc.

Other:

- Excessive absences or moves
- Lack of sensory stimulation during early childhood Language other than English



## ***II. Peer Characteristics/Conditions***

### **Hypothesis**

Degree of cohesion between students relative to sharing common interests, values, and goals  
Peers support/reinforcement of appropriate/inappropriate behavior  
Peers providing/not providing appropriate/adequate models  
Social/Academic skills of peers significantly higher (lower) than referred student  
Peer influence over student's appropriate/inappropriate behavior (e.g., supporting vs. taunting and instigating)  
Expectations/values of peer group that influence student

Other:

## ***III. Curriculum Characteristics/Conditions***

### **Hypothesis**

Curriculum too easy or difficult  
Curriculum relevant/not relevant to child experiences/understanding  
Curriculum flexible/inflexible in its ability to be adapted to students' learning styles or individual needs  
Curriculum presented in a way that relates to child strengths/weaknesses (lecture/auditory, etc.)  
Curriculum presented too fast or slow for student learning rate  
Sufficient/Insufficient opportunity to practice skills  
Length of curriculum assignments too long/too short for attention/concentration skills of student  
Philosophy of curriculum presentation too narrow or broad (e.g., phonics only)  
Curriculum empirically-based or not relative to student learning outcomes

Other:

## ***IV. Teacher Characteristics/Conditions***

### **Hypothesis**

Teacher expectations too high/too low for skills of student  
Feedback to student frequent/not frequent enough  
Rate of reinforcement too high/too low for student needs  
Presence/absence of assessment as an integral component of instruction  
Student and teacher physically too far apart or too close  
Sufficient/Insufficient rehearsal time, direct instruction time, teacher guided practice  
Teacher energy, fatigue, or tolerance resulting in higher positive/negative or more/less frequent feedback and interaction  
Teacher familiar/unfamiliar or experienced/inexperienced with curricular methods needed by child  
Level of supervision (frequency/rate) too high/low for student needs  
Teacher teaching style related to child strength or weakness areas

Other:

## ***V. Classroom/School/District Characteristics/Conditions***

### **Hypothesis**

Classroom seating arrangement fosters problems (too close/near to peers, too far from/close to teacher, near window or distractions, etc.)  
Rules/expectations in class/building far exceed skills of student to be successful  
Presence/absence of a school-wide discipline approach  
School and staff (staff to student) ratio  
Sufficient/insufficient school materials (books, labs, other learning resources)  
Satisfactory/unsatisfactory professional development programs for staff  
Areas in building that are supervised adequately/inadequately  
Consistent/Inconsistent discipline programs/philosophies/differences between staff who interact with students  
Temperature of building/classrooms  
Schedule of the daily activities  
Bus ride (length, problems on bus carry over to school, other)

Other:

## **VI. Family/Neighborhood/Community Characteristics/Conditions**

### **Hypothesis**

- Parent discipline adequate/inadequate (e.g., too severe/passive, teaches child pro social or aggressive strategies)
- Presence of conflict/physical aggression between parents/guardians
- Presence/absence of appropriate/inappropriate levels of parent supervision
- Parents support/non-support of homework completion
- Discrepancy in values/expectations between home/school
- Parent academic skills adequate/inadequate to help child
- Reading and related academic and appropriate extracurricular activities present/absent in or supported by the home
- Parent difficulties (substance abuse, etc.) result in inconsistent parenting, low levels of supervision, negativity
- Parent able/unable or willing/unwilling to reinforce school-related academic/behavior strategies in the home
- Parent expectations too high/too low for child along with too much/too little pressure
- Parent willing/unwilling or able/unable to meet health/nutrition/basic needs of child resulting in potential school absences, tardiness, ability of child to concentrate on school tasks, etc.
- Parent supervision of student relative to the presence/absence of appropriate/ inappropriate adults/peers in community

Other:

**Appendix Form IV**

**Classroom Intervention Progress Plan**

Student \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
<b>Results:</b>	
<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
<b>Results:</b>	

Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
<b>Results:</b>	
Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
<b>Results:</b>	

# Appendix Form V

## Grade Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Intervention Progress Plan

Student \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
Results:	
Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
Results:	

Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
Results:	
Intervention	Who is responsible
	Duration (weeks or month/day/year)
	Desired Outcome
	How Success of Intervention will be Measured
Results:	

**Appendix Form VI: Building-Level SPRINT/RtI<sup>2</sup> Team Academic/Behavioral Intervention Plan**

Student's Name:

Date of Birth:

Teacher's Name:

Grade Level:

Date:

Chronological Age: \_\_\_yr \_\_\_mo

School:

Academic or Behavioral Goal/Target /Objectives	Evidence-based Intervention/ Methods to be Used	People Needed (For Consultation or Direct Services)	Other Resources Needed
Goal 1:			
Goal 2:			
Goal 3:			



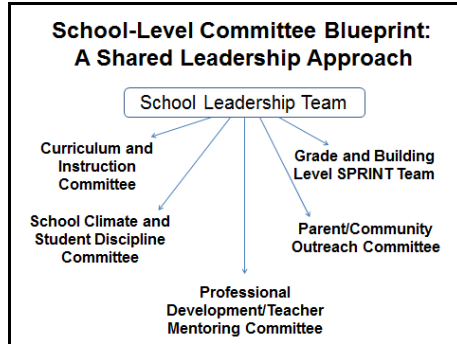
<b>Sequence of Activities Needed to Reach Goal</b>	<b>Timelines</b>		<b>Assessment/ Evaluation Tools or Methods</b>	<b>Data-based Indicators of a Successful Intervention</b>
	<u><b>Start</b></u>	<u><b>Finish</b></u>		
<b>For Goal 1:</b>				<b>Short-Term (or Initial) Indicators of Success:</b>     <b>Long-Term (or Final) Indicators of Success:</b>
<b>For Goal 2:</b>				<b>Short-Term (or Initial) Indicators of Success:</b>     <b>Long-Term (or Final) Indicators of Success:</b>
<b>For Goal 3:</b>				<b>Short-Term (or Initial) Indicators of Success:</b>     <b>Long-Term (or Final) Indicators of Success:</b>

## Appendix VII: Common SPRINT/Rtl<sup>2</sup> Process Questions and Answers

<p><b>What is a <u>Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) initiative?</u></b></p>	<p>A CTAG initiative facilitates effective school practices for all students across a district or school. It is anchored by a comprehensive, evidence-based effective school and schooling model that guides the educational practices that meet the diverse academic and social, emotional, and behavioral learning needs of ALL students.</p> <p>The CTAG initiative recognizes the need for the regular, ongoing assessment of students' academic and behavioral progress. These assessments help schools evaluate the success of their core instructional program(s), and the level and rate of individual student progress. Based on these data, instruction and intervention is continually adjusted to meet student needs within a flexible multi-dimensional (tiered) service delivery model. Analyses of students' response to instruction and intervention, through the use of a data-based problem solving process, guides the decisions regarding the need for more or less intensive services, supports, strategies, or programs within the multi-dimensional service delivery model.</p> <p>When implemented with integrity, CTAG processes provide data that promote quality decisions about the effectiveness of practices ranging from general education core instruction (provided to all students) to high intensity interventions (provided to individual students showing the greatest needs). These data are then utilized to make quality instructional and intervention decisions that maximize students' academic and social, emotional, and behavioral success.</p>
<p><b>What are the primary principles within Project ACHIEVE's CTAG model?</b></p>	<p>The primary principles within the CTAG model used by Project ACHIEVE are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All students receive instruction in the general education curriculum and settings to the greatest degree possible.</li><li>• All students receive instruction that facilitates their academic and social, emotional, and behavioral development, progress, and proficiency.</li><li>• All students receive instruction or interventions that are scientifically or research-based.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students' academic and social, emotional, behavioral progress is monitored on a planned and ongoing basis. The data generated through this process are the basis for all instructional or intervention decisions.</li> <li>• All instructional or intervention decisions are made and supported through a data-driven shared leadership process.</li> <li>• When students are not demonstrating appropriate academic or social, emotional, or behavioral development, progress, or proficiency, functional assessments are completed to identify the underlying reasons, and these are linked to more strategic or intensive instruction and/or intervention.</li> <li>• These more strategic or intensive approaches then are evaluated to determine a student's response, progress, and need for more or less intensive approaches.</li> <li>• Consultation from colleagues, instructional or intervention specialists, or others is encouraged and available to support teachers and others during any phase of the problem solving process.</li> <li>• A multi-tiered range of instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, and programs is available to address students' academic or social, emotional, or behavioral needs.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>How is behavior addressed in the CTAG model?</b></p>	<p>The CTAG model includes the implementation of the research-based principles underlying positive behavioral supports (PBS). Positive behavioral supports involve social, emotional, and behavioral instruction in general education settings with regular, ongoing monitoring of student progress. Progress is evaluated against social, emotional, and behavioral expectations, or "standards," that are developmentally appropriate to the age and maturity level of different groups of students. This is similar to monitoring students' academic progress by evaluating them against curricular, content, and/or state proficiency standards.</p> <p>Social, emotional, or behavioral instruction and intervention are provided using a flexible multi-dimensional (tiered) service delivery model. As with academics, the implementation of more or less intensive instruction or intervention is based on students' responses to their current instruction or intervention within the context of a data-based problem solving process.</p>

**What school-level committees are needed to effectively implement CTAG, and who is on these committees?**



CTAG implementation requires staff collaboration at the school, grade, and individual staff levels. Below are the school-level committees that are instrumental to CTAG success. This committee “blueprint,” however, may need to be adapted to the size and personnel in individual schools.

**The School Leadership Team:**

- Oversees implementation of a school’s strategic planning process. This team is the committee under which all other committees are organized.

Membership:

- Administration
- Committee Chairs from school-level committees
- Selected others to ensure cross-staff representation

**The School Discipline Committee:**

- Oversees the school’s positive behavioral support system (PBSS), school discipline, behavior management, and school safety processes and activities

Membership:

- Building Principal/Administrator
- Teacher from each Grade-level, Teaching Team, and/or Teaching Cluster
- Related Specialty and Support Staff

**The Curriculum and Instruction Committee:**

- Oversees the implementation of new and existing curriculum
- Coordinates the strategic academic instruction and intervention program in a school

Membership:

- Building Principal/Administrator
- Teacher from each Grade-level, Teaching Team, and/or Teaching Cluster
- Instructional Facilitator or Consultant(s)
- Related Specialty and Support Staff (including Special Education)

**The Professional Development/Teacher Mentoring Committee:**

- Organizes, evaluates, and monitors the school's professional development needs and program
- Oversees the school's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Coordinates the mentoring process for staff from first-year through experienced professionals

Membership:

- Building Principal/Administrator
- Representatives from every grade or instructional teaching team
- Related Specialty and Support Staff

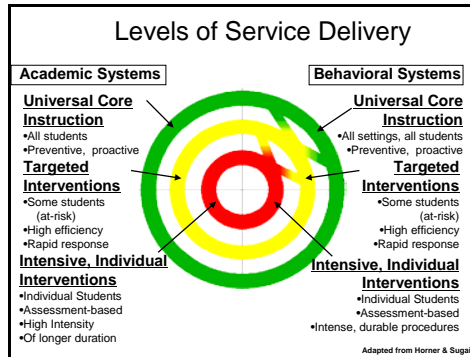
**The School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team (SPRINT):**

- Guides the school's use of data-based problem solving and intervention processes when students are not responding, academically or behaviorally, to effective instruction and interventions
- Coordinates the school's early intervening services, and its strategic and intensive instruction and intervention process for individual students

Membership:

- Building Principal/Administrator
- Curriculum/Academic Intervention Specialists
- Behavioral/Behavior Management Specialists
- Special Education Teachers
- Counselor
- School Psychologist
- Social Worker
- Speech Pathologist
- School Nurse

**What is the focus of a multi-tiered response to instruction and intervention model?**



Academic and social, emotional, and behavioral instruction and intervention occurs within the context of the CTAG’s multi-tiered service delivery approach. Embedded within this approach is a data-based problem solving process that evaluates how specific students respond to instruction or intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) at each tier of service or support. It is extremely important to understand that the multi-tiered model is not a categorical system, but rather a system that organizes and guides the delivery of different intensity levels of instruction or intervention to individual or groups of students as needed. Within this model, there are not “Tier I students,” “Tier II students,” and “Tier III students.” Instead, there are students who need, for example, a “Tier II level” of instructional or intervention service or support in a specific academic and/or social, emotional, or behavioral skill or strand area.

Failure to recognize this subtle, yet critical, distinction can result in an over-emphasis on trying to “categorize” instruction or interventions and students into the tiers. When this occurs, this over-emphasis detracts from the fundamental purpose of the multi-dimensional model which is to link students’ needs with strategic or intensive instruction or interventions. The multi-tiered model should involve a continuum of instruction and intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs with progressive levels of intensity.

Movement through the tiers is fluid. A student is not required to sequentially move through the tiers in order to receive more or less intensive services (i.e. s/he must “fail” in Tier I to receive Tier II services, and in Tier II to receive Tier III services; or s/he must succeed in Tier II services, having been successful with Tier III services, in order to return to Tier I services). Moreover, in certain cases, a student may demonstrate such significant difficulties that interventions at a Tier III intensity level are needed (and delivered) immediately. Finally, students may repeatedly, and over time, move to more or less intensive levels of instructional or intervention support within the multidimensional model. When successful, students receiving Tier II or III supports can always return to a less intensive tier of services. Returning to a less intensive level of services or supports should always be the goal of any intervention.

**What are  
some  
examples of  
“intensity”?**

Across the multi-dimensional tiered model, “intensity” may be defined in different ways:

Intensity of assessment, progress monitoring, and instruction/intervention. Assessments and instruction/intervention can vary, for example, by breadth or depth. Breadth might involve the number of different curricular areas that need to be assessed or addressed through instruction/intervention. Depth might involve the number of specific areas within a single curricular area—for example, a student with difficulties in one versus all five areas of literacy.

The intensity of progress monitoring can vary, for example, by the complexity of developing or administering the assessments, or by the frequency of administration.

Intensity of Individualization. Intensity may vary by the number of students (e.g., an entire classroom, a group of students from the same classroom or grade-level, or just a single student) whose needs call for a specific instructional or intervention service, support, strategy, or program.

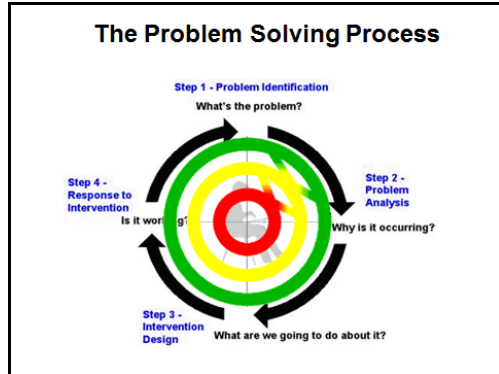
Intensity of Setting, Teacher Expertise, or Teacher Need for Consultant Expertise. Intensity may vary by whether the instruction or intervention can be implemented (a) in a general education classroom versus another more specialized classroom setting, (b) by a general classroom teacher versus a teacher with more specialized skills, and/or (c) by a general classroom or specialized teacher independently versus with the assistance of an expert from a related, but more specialized or multidisciplinary profession.

Intensity of Time. The intensity of time relates to the frequency and/or duration of a service, support, strategy, or program—that is, how many times an hour, day, week, or month it must be provided, and for how long.

Intensity of Teacher-Student Instructional Interactions. The intensity of teacher-student instruction involves the interactions needed to successfully implement some instructional or intervention approaches. Although a separate category, the intensity of teacher-student instructional interactions is closely tied to individualization and related time factors. Examples of instructional interactions here may include the approaches (and student’s) need for:

- Teacher proximity
- Explicit and frequent feedback
- Opportunities for student initiated questions
- Observation of individual students
- Opportunities for student practice
- Opportunities for student interaction

**How does problem solving occur across the tiers of services, supports, strategies, and programs?**



Effective problem solving can occur at several levels ranging from informal to formal. At the most informal level, classroom teachers utilize problem solving as part of their effective instructional processes—adjusting their instruction to students’ learning styles, approaches, and responses, or implementing classroom-based intervention when needed. However, when students do not respond over time, or when they are exhibiting significant difficulties, the problem solving process becomes more formalized, and the intensity of instruction or intervention increases. Regardless, the problem solving process is critical to properly identifying student need, linking need to instructional changes or interventions, and determining whether desired outcomes actually occur.

As depicted in the figure, problem solving is an evolving process consisting of four basic steps:

1. Problem Identification – What is the problem?
2. Problem Analysis – What is/are the reason(s) the identified problem is occurring?
3. Intervention Design and Implementation – Based on identified student needs, what instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs need to be designed and implemented?
4. Response to Intervention/Instruction. – Based on evaluations of student response, were the desired outcomes achieved?

The central goal of the CTAG problem solving process is to successfully validate why a student is having academic or social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties, and link the results of the functional assessments to specific instruction or intervention practices. This process begins by accurately identifying the specific problem. In doing this, “symptoms” needed to be differentiated from “problems.”

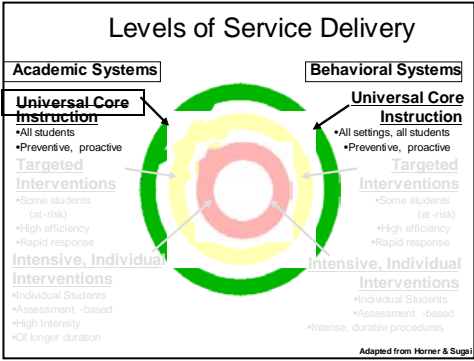


	<p>For example, if three students are having difficulty with reading comprehension, the problem identification and analysis process may determine that Student A has comprehension problems in all areas of comprehension; Student B has difficulties with inferential comprehension questions, but not concrete or factual comprehension questions; and Student C is having difficulties with phonetic decoding and fluency, which are interfering with comprehension. For Student A, the comprehension difficulties <u>represent</u> the problem. For Student B, a specific area of difficulty in comprehension represents the problem. For Student C, the comprehension problems are symptomatic of the underlying decoding and fluency problems.</p> <p>Similarly, if three high school students are persistently late to school in the morning, Student A's tardiness may involve organization and time management in getting up and making the school bus; Student B's difficulties may involve needing to get her siblings to school before leaving herself; and Student C's difficulties may involve a larger peer group that often gathers in school to socialize and doesn't hear or react to the "warning bell." While the tardiness is a problem, for these three students, it does not fully represent "the" problem.</p> <p>Once the problem has been clarified, the reasons for the problem need to be validated and then linked to intervention. For example, some academic problems occur because (a) the skills were never taught, (b) taught to mastery, or (c) mastered at a level of independent application. Some behavioral problems occur because (a) the skills were never taught or mastered, (b) the student is not motivated to use already-mastered skills, or (c) the student is inconsistently held responsible for appropriate behavior. If validated, each of these problem areas would need a different type of instructional or intervention approach. Thus, in the problem solving process, functional assessment (problem analysis) results lead to strategic (not random) interventions.</p>
<p><b>Where does universal screening and "standard protocol" intervention approaches fit into the CTAG/Rtl<sup>2</sup> process?</b></p>	<p>As noted earlier, embedded within the CTAG and its multi-tiered service delivery approaches is the notion of "Response to Instruction and Intervention" (Rtl<sup>2</sup>).</p> <p>Relative to universal screening, the CTAG initiative emphasizes that classroom teachers are the best universal "screeners," and that screening should utilize multiple assessment approaches and tools. In addition, given the potential for "false positive" and "false negative" results—where students are identified as having difficulties when they do not, or identified without difficulties when some actually are present—any screening results that identify students as "at-risk" or "needing services" should be considered only as "warning flags" that need to be validated through more extensive assessments.</p>

**How does universal screening fit into the CTAG/Rtl<sup>2</sup> process?**

Relative to universal intervention, while “standard protocol” intervention approaches help organize the availability of a school or district’s multi-tiered instructional or intervention services and supports, the decision as to what services or supports are needed by a specific student should be linked to the functional assessments completed as part of the problem solving process. That is, students should not automatically receive any instruction or intervention listed on a standard intervention protocol based solely on the results of a screening assessment (see above) or due to a lack of success in their classrooms. Once again, screening “red flags” need further validation, and students’ lack of classroom success requires additional functional assessments. This additional assessment serves to determine the underlying reasons that explain why the student is having academic or social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties. Once these reasons are determined, they can be linked to instructional or intervention approaches that, hopefully, are on the standard protocol.

# Tier I



**What is Tier I instruction?**

Effective Tier I instruction (a) uses high quality research-proven core instructional approaches, that (b) are linked to state or national content standards, (c) differentiated to meet students’ diverse learning needs, and (d) monitored regularly for effectiveness as evidenced by student mastery on curriculum-based and standards-based assessments. Tier I instruction should meet the needs of a majority of students. It should include classroom-based instructional or intervention supports.

<p><b>For Academics?</b></p>	<p>For academics, schools should identify an effective, research-based Tier I core program of study that is directly linked to the state’s standards. Selecting a core program to best address the needs of students at a particular school should be based on local data that include: (a) student achievement patterns, (b) the experience and expertise of administrators and teachers, (c) the resources and supports available, (d) whether or not the school has an instructional facilitator on staff, etc. For schools with highly effective leaders, experts and well-trained teachers, data-driven instructional practices, and successful professional development and teaming processes, the core program can be chosen to provide more instructional freedom, flexibility, autonomy, and teacher-driven implementation. For schools that lack some or all of these characteristics, a more directive core program may be necessary.</p>
<p><b>For Behavior?</b></p>	<p>For behavior at Tier I, schools should identify a core set of interpersonal, social problem solving, conflict prevention and resolution, and emotional coping skills. This should become part of a school-wide behavioral accountability system that identifies behavioral expectations and differentiated responses to increasing levels of inappropriate student behavior across all classroom and school settings. The goal of this entire Positive Behavioral Support System (PBSS) is to help students learn, master, and apply effective social, emotional, and behavioral self-management approaches. Thus, all students need to receive classroom-based social skills instruction through a research-based core curriculum, and there needs to be a consistent system of incentives and consequences to motivate students to demonstrate these learned skills.</p> <p>Finally, skill instruction should focus on the common areas of a school (e.g., hallways, bathrooms, cafeterias, buses, assemblies), and should include ways to prevent and respond to teasing, taunting, bullying, harassment, and physical aggression.</p>
<p><b>Who provides Tier I academic and behavioral instruction?</b></p>	<p>Tier 1 instruction is typically provided by the general education classroom teacher or through a co-teaching partnership that involves general education teachers and other support specialists. Other individuals, especially grade level/departmental colleagues and instructional or behavioral consultants, may also be involved in supporting Tier I instruction and, when needed, classroom-based interventions.</p>
<p><b>Where does it occur?</b></p>	<p>Tier I instruction occurs in the general education classroom.</p>

**What  
assessment  
is done at Tier  
I?**

Assessment at the Tier I level focuses on answering the following types of primary academic and behavioral assessment questions at a classroom or grade/instructional level:

1. What is the current functional academic and behavioral status of every student (i.e., the knowledge and skills that they have mastered), and to what degree have they mastered the prerequisite skills needed for the current academic and behavioral instructional program?
2. Prior to initial instruction, are individual students or groups of students at risk for not meeting specific academic and behavioral standards, expectations, and proficiencies? Why, and what instructional or intervention approaches need to be integrated into the initial instruction?
3. Given the breadth of student skill groups in the classroom, is the teacher able to successfully differentiate instruction?
4. During and after instruction, have students benefitted from the differentiated instruction they have received?
5. Are students mastering the academic and behavioral standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills being taught at a level of independent practice, use, and application?
6. For the students who are not mastering the standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills over time or to a significant degree, why are they having difficulty, and what classroom-based (or other) instructional or intervention approaches are needed?
7. Have the classroom-based (or other) instructional or intervention approaches helped students to master desired/needed standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills?

**For  
Academics?**

Given these questions, the Tier I assessment system should include a review and screening process that collects and analyzes (a) existing student proficiency data (e.g., on the state standards test, nine week benchmark assessments and Target Testing data); (b) screening data (e.g., the Developmental Assessment of Reading, the DIBELS); and (c) direct or curriculum-based assessment data generated in the classroom to directly assess students' skills, and progress toward mastering those skills. The assessment system should help to identify students at-risk of not mastering grade level standards, students who are unsuccessful or underachieving in mastering these standards, and students who are in need of enrichment. When students are not responding to effective instruction, the assessment system should identify where students are in the process of learning grade level standards, and what instructional or intervention approaches or supports are needed to help them move forward.

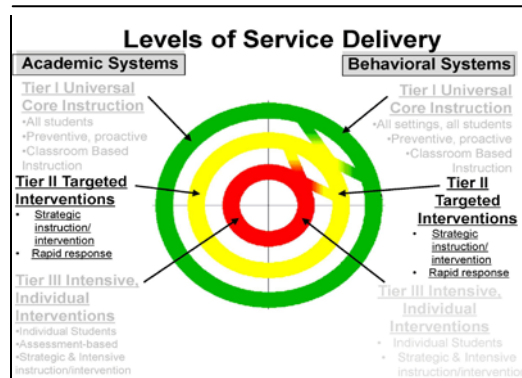
<p><b>For Behavior?</b></p>	<p>Continuous formative assessment and routine progress monitoring should be used to guide instructional practices at Tier I. For those students at-risk of not mastering grade level standards, progress monitoring should occur more frequently to assess the effectiveness of the differentiated instruction being provided. Formative assessments and progress monitoring tools include a combination of student grades, work samples and authentic assessments, as well as other student progress assessments including curriculum-based measures such as the DIBELS.</p> <p>Given the questions above, the Tier I screening of students' social, emotional, and behavioral status, progress, and proficiency also involves multiple assessment approaches that evaluate students' individual, group, classroom, and common school area interactions. A comprehensive assessment system here also involves organizing and reviewing existing data, along with collecting screening, progress monitoring, and formative and summative evaluation data. The sources of these data may come from: (a) formal and informal administrator, teacher, or staff observations; (b) formal and informal administrator, teacher, and staff interviews; (c) formal and informal records such as teacher notes, logs, or running records; office disciplinary referrals; and/or report card notations; or (d) formal behavior rating scales or surveys completed by classroom teachers.</p>
<p><b>What academic and behavioral instructional grouping is used at Tier I?</b></p>	<p>Although whole-class and small group instruction is often characteristic of Tier 1 instruction, it should be kept in mind that there is no definitive link between a tier and a specific instructional grouping approach. Grouping is a function of the instructional goals and objectives, the curricular materials and instructional resources, how students best learn, and how teachers need to teach in order to maximize student outcomes and mastery. Students may receive instruction in a whole group or a small group depending on the lesson and the differentiation needed. Flexible groups may be used to provide the prerequisite or advanced organizers needed prior to whole-group instruction, or to provide the review and extra practice after instruction for some or all students as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>How is problem solving used at the Tier I Level?</b></p>	<p>When students are not demonstrating appropriate levels of progress, mastery, or proficiency, classroom teachers use data-based problem solving to evaluate the student, instructional, and/or curricular factors that may explain this lack of success. The results of this problem solving process may lead to classroom-based instructional or intervention approaches, or they may indicate that a more intensive assessment process, leading to more strategic or intensive instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs is needed. At the Tier I level, teachers may use the problem solving process independently or with consultative assistance from other colleagues.</p>

**What professional development focus is needed at Tier I for academics and behavior?**

Professional Development at the Tier I level should focus on at least the following competencies:

- Effectively differentiating instruction to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners.
- Implementing components in the Positive Academic Services and Supports (PASS) blueprint for academic curriculum, instruction, and response. These components include: effective instruction, remediation, intervention, accommodations, and informal modifications.
- Implementing components in the Positive Behavioral Self-Management System (PBSS) blueprint for discipline, behavioral management, self-management, and school safety.
- Conducting effective formative and summative evaluations and using progress monitoring to routinely measure academic and behavioral outcomes.
- Utilizing the problem solving process at the individual teacher or grade level to effectively link student needs to appropriate differentiated instruction and social, emotional, or behavioral intervention.
- Linking functional assessment results with scientifically-, evidence-, and research-based instructional or intervention approaches.

## Tier II



### What is Tier II instruction or intervention for academics and behavior?

Instruction or intervention at Tier II includes the specific services, supports, strategies, and/or programs that students need to be successful in the general education curriculum and classroom. Thus, the Tier I academic and social, emotional, behavioral goals, objectives, and expected proficiencies continue to be the primary targets, and effective Tier I instruction continues to be essential. As noted earlier, such instruction (a) uses high quality research-proven core instructional approaches, that (b) are linked to state or national content standards, (c) differentiated to meet students' diverse learning needs, and (d) monitored regularly for effectiveness as evidenced by student mastery on curriculum-based and standards-based assessments.

Depending on the results of the functional assessment to determine why students are demonstrating academic or behavioral challenges, Tier II instruction may include a range of services, supports, strategies, and/or programs that help students to be successful in the core instruction. For a few students, however, the assessment may determine that an alternate core curriculum is needed, or that a student lacks so many prerequisite skills that the core curriculum needs to be put aside until "catch-up" approaches are successfully implemented.

<p><b>For Academics?</b></p> <p><b>For Behavior?</b></p>	<p>Instructional or intervention strategies or programs at this level typically are strategically targeted to the underlying reasons for a student’s lack of “response” to Tier I instruction and classroom-based instructional or intervention approaches. These may involve student-specific factors, or instructional or curriculum-based factors that are impacting student learning, progress, and proficiency. The assessment or intervention process may involve colleagues or other school-based instructional consultants who work with the classroom teacher(s) to address students’ needs. Tier II instruction or intervention typically is student-specific, although groups of students with the same difficulties and needs can certainly be grouped together as appropriate.</p> <p>As with academics, the Tier I social, emotional, and behavioral competency and self-management goals and objectives of the Positive Behavioral Support System (PBSS) continue to be the primary focus. Once again, the results of a functional assessment at this level need to be linked to specific instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, and/or programs that may decrease or eliminate inappropriate student behavior, and/or increase social, emotional, or behavioral skills. In addition to possible teacher/instructional, curricular, classroom, or home/community factors that explain the presenting challenges, the student-specific factors include possible skill and mastery deficits, motivational or performance deficits, inconsistency, and the impact of peer interactions and/or interactions that occur in the common areas of the school (e.g., hallways, bathrooms, cafeteria, buses). There are many intervention approaches available to address these different factors. The assessment or intervention process, again, may involve colleagues or other school-based instructional consultants who work with the classroom teacher(s) to address students’ needs. Tier II instruction or intervention typically is student-specific, although groups of students with the same difficulties and needs can certainly be grouped together as appropriate.</p> <p>At Tier II, students are receiving services, supports, strategies, and/or programs that are more intensive than those provided at the Tier I level in an individual school (see the section above that discusses “intensity”). Tier II services and supports are identified, organized, and designated as such by each specific school or district. That is, Tier II services at one school or district may be Tier I or Tier III services at another school or in the next district.</p>
<p><b>Who provides Tier II intervention for academics and behavior?</b></p> <p><b>Where can Tier II academic and behavioral interventions be provided?</b></p>	<p>Tier II instruction and/or intervention is implemented by the general education classroom teacher to the greatest degree possible. Often supporting this implementation is additional training, consultation, and supervision. At times, the instruction or intervention approaches may be supported and implemented in settings outside the general education classroom by instructional (for academic needs) or related services/mental health (for social, emotional, or behavioral needs) support staff. When this occurs, the general education classroom teacher is fully involved in the planning and evaluation of these services and supports—with the goal still being to facilitate the student’s regular classroom academic and behavioral progress, mastery, and proficiency. Thus, as out-of-classroom approaches are successful, they are integrated into the general education classroom as soon as possible.</p>



**What assessment is needed at Tier II for academics and behavior?**

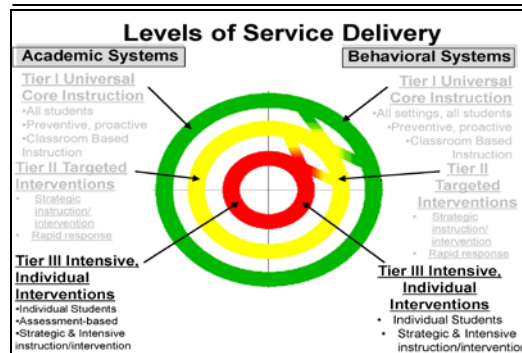
Assessment at the Tier II level focuses especially on answering the following types of primary assessment questions for students who are at risk, underachieving, unresponsive, or unsuccessful in learning, mastering, and becoming proficient in the academic and behavioral standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills being taught at their grade level:

1. What is the current functional academic and behavioral status (i.e., the knowledge and skills that they have mastered) of the students receiving Tier II services or supports?
2. What academic and behavioral standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills has each student learned, mastered, and become proficient in at his/her grade level?
3. What instructional or intervention approaches should the primary classroom teacher be using to maintain the student's progress and proficiency in academic or behavioral areas where the student is currently successful?
4. For the academic and/or behavioral areas of concern—or areas where a student is not functioning at grade level and/or learning, mastering, and/or demonstrating proficiency—what are the reasons underlying these circumstances?
5. What instructional or intervention approaches are needed to resolve the situations identified and analyzed, or what approaches are needed to facilitate the student's grade-level learning, mastery, and proficiency?
6. During and after more intensive instruction or intervention identified in Question 5 above, has the student made progress toward mastery and proficiency in the specific area(s) of concern?
7. For students who still are not mastering the standards and expectations over time or to a significant degree, are additional assessments or services and supports needed?

Given these questions and building on Tier I assessment results, the Tier II assessment system should include a data collection and analysis focused on diagnostic, functional assessment, more frequent or specialized progress monitoring, and outcome-specific formative and summative evaluation. These assessments are likely to be more targeted, intensive, specialized, and/or multidisciplinary.

<p><b>What academic and behavioral instructional grouping is used at Tier II?</b></p>	<p>Once again, there is no definitive link between a tier and a specific instructional grouping approach. Grouping is a function of the instructional goals and objectives, the curricular materials and instructional resources, how students best learn, and how teachers need to teach in order to maximize student outcomes and mastery. Students may receive instruction in a whole group or a small group depending on the lesson and the differentiation needed. At the same time, some Tier II instruction or intervention may involve small group or individualized implementation. As this is successful, the transfer to whole- or larger-group general education classroom implementation is a planned and ultimate goal.</p>
<p><b>How is problem solving used at Tier II?</b></p>	<p>When students are not demonstrating progress, mastery, or proficiency after classroom-based instructional or intervention approaches, or they are presenting significant academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges or needs, the data-based problem solving process becomes more formal, and it involves a grade- or instructional-level problem solving team, or a building-level multidisciplinary SPRINT team (see the description of this team in the Committee section above). As noted above, problem analysis now is likely to be more targeted, intensive, specialized, and/or multidisciplinary.</p> <p>Once the problem analysis has confirmed the underlying reasons for the student's difficulties (which may involve instruction, curriculum, or other non-student factors), the results are linked to, typically, more intensive instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs.</p>
<p><b>What professional development focus is needed at Tier II for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>Professional development (PD) at the Tier II level builds from that implemented at the Tier I level. Professional development here involves everyone who is involved in the implementation, monitoring, and/or evaluation of outcomes for students who need more intensive (Tier II) instruction or intervention services, support, strategies, or programs. The PD should focus on ensuring that staff has the knowledge and understanding, the implementation skills and techniques, and the consultation and supervision processes needed during the entire data-based problem solving process. At times, PD may need to be individualized to those who are directly implementing the instruction or intervention, and those who are indirectly supporting this implementation. Much of the knowledge and skills provided through PD will center on the specific academic or social, emotional, or behavioral needs of students receiving services or supports at this level of intensity.</p>

## Tier III



### What is Tier III instruction or intervention for academics and behavior?

Tier III services, supports, strategies, or programs are highly specialized and more intensive than those provided at the Tier II level (see the section above that discusses “intensity”). As such, across the problem identification, problem analysis, and intervention design, preparation, implementation, and evaluation phases, they often involve teachers and multidisciplinary consultants with more specialized training, knowledge, skills, and expertise. As Tier III instructional or intervention goals and outcomes are highly student-specific, Tier III strategies or programs often make significant changes to the school or grade-level’s Tier I core instruction, and in some cases, an entirely different core curriculum may be needed and used.

Given the intensity of needs in different academic and/or social, emotional, or behavioral areas, a student could receive instruction and additional instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs simultaneously at the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III levels. For example, in the academic and behavioral areas, students who are performing at grade level or above would receive Tier I instruction. In other academic or behavioral areas where Tier II services and supports are needed, students could simultaneously receive Tier I and II instruction and supports. In the areas of greatest or most significant concern, students could simultaneously receive Tier III services or supports.

Remember that schools or districts identify, on their own, the services and supports that they consider to be at the Tier III level of intensity. Thus, Tier III services at one school may be considered Tier II services at another school within or in the next district.

<p><b>Who provides Tier III instruction or intervention for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>Due to the level of intensity, the implementation of Tier III instruction or intervention approaches often is facilitated and/or provided by teachers or support professionals who have specific and more specialized skills in the student's area(s) of need. Depending on the areas of concern, general education classroom teachers may continue to be primarily responsible for the core instruction and for the implementation of the Tier III instructional or intervention approaches. When this occurs the support professionals typically are helping to design and evaluate the Tier III approaches, and they are providing direct consultation to the general education teacher(s) to ensure that the approaches are implemented in the general education classroom with appropriate integrity and intensity.</p>
<p><b>Where can Tier III intervention be provided for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>For some concerns, the Tier III services, supports, strategies, or programs are provided outside of the general education classroom by support professionals who are working directly with specific students. These professionals may include, for example, general or special education teachers, instructional or behavioral specialists, or related services personnel (e.g., counselors, psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists, occupational or physical therapists, school-based mental health therapists). The goal of the Tier III instructional or intervention process is to attain the success needed to move to the least intensive level of services, supports, strategies, or programs. If supported by evaluation data, it is important to note that a student could transition from a Tier III intensity level of services and supports directly to a Tier I level of services and supports.</p>
<p><b>What assessment is needed at Tier III for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>Assessment at the Tier III level focuses especially on answering the following primary academic and behavioral assessment questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the current functional academic and behavioral status (i.e., the knowledge and skills that they have mastered) of the students receiving Tier III services or supports?</li> <li>2. In what academic and behavioral standards, expectations, learning objectives, and/or skills has each student learned, mastered, and become proficient in at his/her grade level?</li> <li>3. What instructional or intervention approaches should the primary classroom teacher be using to maintain the student's progress and proficiency in academic or behavioral areas where the student is currently successful?</li> </ol>

	<p>4. For the academic and/or behavioral areas of concern—or areas where a student is not functioning at grade level and/or learning, mastering, and/or demonstrating proficiency—what are the reasons underlying these circumstances?</p> <p>5. What Tier II and/or Tier III instructional or intervention approaches are needed to resolve the situations identified and analyzed, or what approaches are needed to facilitate the student’s grade-level learning, mastery, and proficiency?</p> <p>6. During and after more intensive instruction or intervention identified in Question 5 above, has the student made progress toward mastery and proficiency in the specific area(s) of concern?</p> <p>7. For students who still are not mastering the standards and expectations over time or to a significant degree, are additional assessments or services and supports needed?</p> <p>Given these questions and building on Tier I and II assessment results, the Tier III assessment system should include data collection and analysis focused on diagnostic, functional assessment, more frequent or specialized progress monitoring, and outcome-specific formative and summative evaluation. These assessments are likely to be more targeted, intensive, specialized, and/or multidisciplinary.</p>
<p><b>What instructional grouping is used at Tier III for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>The intensity of instruction or intervention at this level typically requires small group and/or individual student implementation in the areas of academic or behavioral concern.</p>
<p><b>How is problem solving used at the Tier III level?</b></p>	<p>The data-based problem solving process at this level is highly formal and systematic, and it typically involves the building-level multidisciplinary SPRINT team (see the description of this team in the Committee section above). Problem analysis at this level—involving assessments to determine the reasons for a student’s difficulties or presenting problems—is targeted, intensive, specialized, and multidisciplinary in nature. Beyond assessing the teacher-instructional, curriculum, and students factors present in a school that are contributing to a problem situation, the analysis extends to evaluations of possible classroom/peer, school/district, and home/community factors.</p>

	<p>As always, once the problem analysis has confirmed the underlying reasons for the student's difficulties, results are linked to instructional or intervention services, supports, strategies, or programs at the needed level of intensity. Given the breadth of the assessments (and their results), these services or supports also may involve the student's family, and community-based, as well as school-based, professionals.</p>
<p><b>What professional development focus is needed at Tier III for academics and behavior?</b></p>	<p>Professional development (PD) at the Tier III level builds from that implemented at the Tier I and Tier II levels. Thus, professional development still involves everyone involved in the problem identification and analysis process, and/or the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of outcomes for students needing more intensive (Tier III) instruction or intervention services, support, strategies, or programs. The PD continues to focus on ensuring that staff have the knowledge and understanding, the implementation skills and techniques, and the consultation and supervision processes needed during the entire data-based problem solving process. At this level, however, the PD is targeted to meet the needs of staff members who provide the most intensive, specialized services in the school or district.</p>
<p><b>How does a decision to determine a student's eligibility for special education services fit into CTAG?</b></p>	<p>The RtI<sup>2</sup> process within CTAG cannot be used in lieu of or to restrict a student's protections and rights to a free, appropriate, and public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). If at any point in the problem solving process, a concern is raised that a student has a disability, the procedural safeguards under IDEA must be followed.</p> <p>Nonetheless, when a student receives services and supports through the CTAG/RtI<sup>2</sup> process, the assessment and outcome data can be used to support the decision whereby a student qualifies for IDEA services through an IEP.</p>