SPED Breakout

ORTIi Initial Training

10.18.17

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| 1. Role of SPED teachers as students are transitioning from Tier I to Tier II? And Tier I interventions. Tier II interventions are not SPED interventions but are typically under the scope of general education; with that being said, a student who is eligible for SPED may best fit into a Tier II intervention as part of their IEP plan. It is important to analyze data and determine student needs. It is important to determine what interventions have been provided prior to moving forward with a SPED referral.
2. How much RTI before we move up a Tier? As we go through the training sequence, we will help folks develop ***decision rules*** that will give districts a “road map” to determine how to move students up through the Tiers. This will give districts some guidance on how to support students as well as utilizing district resources. Research says that a student needs access to at least 20 sessions (approximately 4 weeks of time IF a student is attending and engaged every day) in order to gain skills and evaluate whether the intervention is impacting growth. Thus it is important for students to have access to evidence-based interventions for long enough to determine if the intervention is the right size, match, level of need, intensity. If the student does not make adequate progress, the team would change/intensify the intervention. Typically, after at least 2 interventions, if the student continues to not make adequate progress, the team would move to an Individual Problem Solving process. This would allow a team to dig deeper into a student’s needs. This also gives a team an opportunity to talk with parents about their concern as well as look at a developmental history.
3. How does RTI transition into an SLD eligibility? In this system, we *strongly* encourage referrals to come from a team vs. individual teacher. The team would use decision rules to intensify instruction through the tiers. When the team determines that a SPED referral is appropriate, the team obtains consent to do a comprehensive evaluation and then has a evaluation planning meeting. The data collected from core instruction and interventions are used as part of the evaluation, as well as other sources of information as needed to meet the criteria for a comprehensive evaluation and truly examine all areas of concern and functioning.
4. For schools who are doing RTI Lite, what is the best way to move forward with RTI? One brick at a time! It is important to strengthen your system through the tools provided to determine how to support schools (Matrix). This will allow teams to look through the lens of what they currently are doing and how to systematically systemize their system. This will allow teams to look at how they are providing core instruction to ensure students have access to grade level content. Leadership teams need to continually communicate with staff to help them understand what a fully implemented RTI system looks like, AND the positive impact that it can have on all students.
5. Who provides interventions? Specialists (Title 1 and SPED) vs. classroom teachers? This depends ☺ It is important to know that students have access to core instruction in the gen. ed setting for 90 min (110 min in a 4 day week) and interventions occur outside of the 90 (110) min. When students receive interventions outside of the core, sometimes it is a certified teacher giving it and sometimes it is a instructional assistant who gives those interventions. Specialists can also provide interventions. It depends on a school/districts staffing, resources, and organizational structure. To be clear, moving to placement in an intervention does not constitute moving to SPED, and TIER II interventions are within the scope of General education. In some cases, however, a Tier Ii intervention may be an appropriate part of an SLD identified students support plan.
6. What counts as a true intervention? We would want to ensure that the intervention is an evidence-based intervention. If the intervention is delivered with fidelity and implemented as intended, one of the first things that will occur is to look at the group progress vs. individual student. If during that analysis, the team determines that all students are not progressing, this may be an “adult/instructional issue” vs a “student issue”. If the team determines that the other students are progressing at an appropriate rate, than the team would need to look at the individual student.

Can buildings decide it counts after the fact? No. Not best practice. Districts should identify interventions that that meet their criteria for use, provide appropriate training, and monitor the fidelity of intervention delivery, and have decision rules surrounding the appropriate use of an intervention. 1. Can you use RTI for identification as well as PSW? There is no such thing as a ***hybrid model*** per se in the OARs. A district must decide which method it is using, either PSW or RTI, and conduct the eval in accordance with the OARS. However, a district can, and must, use RTI components (appropriate, evidenced-based instruction, progress monitoring that informs instruction, etc.) as part of the decision making for ALL evals regardless of method, and a cognitive eval may be included as part of a comprehensive evaluation when using RTI as the method of identification. In practice, some districts use what they call a “hybrid” model, i.e., have an rti system in place and then use the results of a cognitive eval to establish a PSW and use that as the primary source of data for the SLD decision. A hybrid model puts stress on your system, confuses decision making, undermines the mindset around your RTI system, and weakens accountability for implementing RTI fully and with fidelity. We DO NOT recommend this. A-la Ghostbusters, “Do not cross the streams!”
2. When do you stick with the RTI process vs. moving forward with eligibility? Use of decision rules and intensification of interventions. See above.
3. If we do transition from PSW to RTI, what are good tools/ tips to move forward? This is a process ☺ that swill likely take place over the next couple years. Year 1 is about focusing on Tier 1 (core), year 2 is Tier 2, and year 3 is Tier 3 and SPED. It is important to have a solid system in place in order to use RTI for SLD eligibility. With that being said, it is important to set a vision and include SPED folks in the planning of making this change. There are some specific barriers that may arise when making this move. Common barriers may include misunderstanding about what constitutes a comprehensive eval, what constitutes adequate core instruction, whether a cognitive eval is required (it is not), concern/confusion about changing roles, etc.
4. What do you say to teachers that say it is taking so long to make students eligible? Students are receiving strong intervention along the way. Yes, it does take time, but kids are receiving high quality instruction both in core and in interventions prior to making this decision. It is important to give students the time to show their ability to develop and generalize their academic skills. It helps teachers and parents to be confortable with the process when the interventions, data collection, and timelines for making decisions are clear and there is follow through.
5. If you qualify a student using PSW and your district switches, what does your 3 year elig. Look like? The team looks at the weight of the interventions and the rate of learning from the student. There will be a great deal of useful information about interventions and support provided, as well as progress monitoring data. When we look at 3 year re-evals, the team obtains consent to do any additional testing that is needed, as well as look what we currently have.
6. How do you use RTI for EL’s when looking at eligibility? As always, but perhaps even more so with ELs, it is crucial to carefully examine language and learning history and growth over time with both language and academic skills. Utilizing cohort group data to determine if other students who have similar learning and language history are progressing at the same rate. In addition, it is important to utilize decision rules that are specific to EL’s. This will be addressed as you move through the project ☺
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