RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION PLAN

Beacon City School District's Plan for Elementary Literacy Intervention

2013

Response to Intervention Plan

Beacon City School District Elementary Schools

The following individuals have represented their elementary schools on one of three Literacy RTI Committees and have been involved in the writing this RtI Plan:

Name	Title/Position	School Building
Matthew Coumbes	Reading Teacher	JV Forrestal
Neta Mitchell	Reading Teacher	Glenham
Margaret Feinstein	Reading Teacher	Sargent
Kathleen Wiacek	Reading Teacher	South Avenue
Lillian Goldsmith	ESL Teacher	JV Forrestal
Jose Contreras	ESL Teacher	Glenham
Sophie Gourdon	ESL Teacher	Sargent
Katie Lokmaci	ESL teacher	South Avenue
Vicki Hoerup	Special Education Teacher	JV Forrestal and South Avenue
Frank Zito	School Psychologist	JV Forrestal and Glenham
Erik Wright	Principal	JV Forrestal
Dawn Condello	Principal	Glenham
Tarkan Ceng	Principal	Sargent
Cara Conrad	Principal	South Avenue

The District RtI Committees were charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Review the New York State RTI requirements, research on effective literacy assessment, instruction, and intervention
2. Articulate & evaluate current practices in light of the research and regulations
3. Identify gaps and make recommendations
4. Create a Literacy RTI plan that aligns practices across the four elementary schools.

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION **4**

Response to Intervention Defined 4

Legislative Background 4

Minimum Requirements 4

SECTION 2: RTI AS A MULTI-TIERED PREVENTION FRAMEWORK **7**

Tier One Intervention 8

Tier Two Intervention 12

Tier Three Intervention 14

SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT WITHIN AN RTI FRAMEWORK **15**

Screening 15

Progress Monitoring 17

Diagnostic Assessments 18

SECTION 4: DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING **19**

Determining Initial Risk Status 19

Determining Student Response to Intervention 20

LD Determination 21

SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT **21**

SECTION 6: PARENT NOTIFICATION 22

Appendix A **23**

Documentation of the Determination of Eligibility for a Student Suspected of Having a Learning Disability 23

Appendix B **25**

Response to Intervention Parent Letter Sample 25

REFERENCES **26**

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a data-informed general education process designed to identify students who are at risk of performing lower academically than desired, to intervene by providing targeted supplemental interventions to improve specific skills, and to measure the impact of the interventions on student progress.

Response to Intervention Defined

Response to Intervention integrates assessment, instruction, and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement. Within the RtI framework, schools use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, provide evidence-based interventions, monitor student progress, adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities (NCRTI, 2010).

Legislative Background

In September of 2007, the NYS Board of Regents approved multiple amendments to 8 NY Code of Rules and Regulations that requires schools to establish an RtI policy and procedures for students in grades K-4 in the area of literacy. These amendments established a policy framework for RtI in regulations relating to school-wide screenings, minimum components of RtI programs, parent notification, and the use of RtI to identify students with learning disabilities. By adding Section 100.2(ii) to Part 100 of the Commissioner's Regulations it set forth minimum requirements for using an RtI process to determine a student's response to research-based intervention.

Minimum Requirements

The Regents policy framework for RtI . . .

1. Defines RtI to minimally include:

• **Appropriate instruction** delivered to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel. Appropriate instruction in reading means **scientific research-based reading programs** that include **explicit and systematic instruction** in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies.

• **Screenings** applied to all students in the class to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates.

• **Instruction matched to student need** with **increasingly intensive levels of targeted intervention** and instruction for students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards.

• **Repeated assessments** of student achievement which should include curriculum based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward age or grade level standards.

• The **application of information** about the student's response to intervention **to make educational decisions** about changes in goals, instruction and/or services and the decision to make a referral for special education programs and/or services.

• **Written notification to the parents** when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about the:

- amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected
- the general education services that will be provided
- strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning, and
- parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

2. Requires each school district to establish a plan and policies for implementing school-wide approaches and pre-referral interventions in order to remediate a student's performance prior to referral for special education, which may include the RtI process as part of a district's school-wide approach.

The school district must **select and define the specific structure and components of its RtI program**, including, but not limited to the:

- criteria for determining the levels of intervention to be provided to students
- types of interventions
- amount and nature of student performance data to be collected, and
- manner and frequency for progress monitoring. *[8 NYCRR section 100.2(ii)]*

3. Requires each school district implementing an RtI program to take appropriate steps to ensure that staff members have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement an RtI program and that such program is implemented consistent with the specific structure and components of the model. *[8 NYCRR section 100.2(ii)*]

4. Authorizes the use of RtI in the State's criteria to determine learning disabilities (LD) and requires effective July 1, 2012, that all school districts have an RtI program in place as part of the process to determine if a student in grades K-4 is a student with a learning disability in the area of reading. "*Effective on or after July 1, 2012, a school district shall not use the severe discrepancy criteria to determine that a student in kindergarten through grade four has a learning disability in the area of reading*." [8 NYCRR section 200.4(j)]

In addition to the above RtI requirements, regulations adopted by the Regents regarding screening of students with low test scores now requires a review of the students' instructional programs in reading

and mathematics to ensure that explicit and research validated instruction is being provided in reading and mathematics.

Students with low test scores must be monitored periodically through screenings and on-going assessments of the student's reading and mathematics abilities and skills.

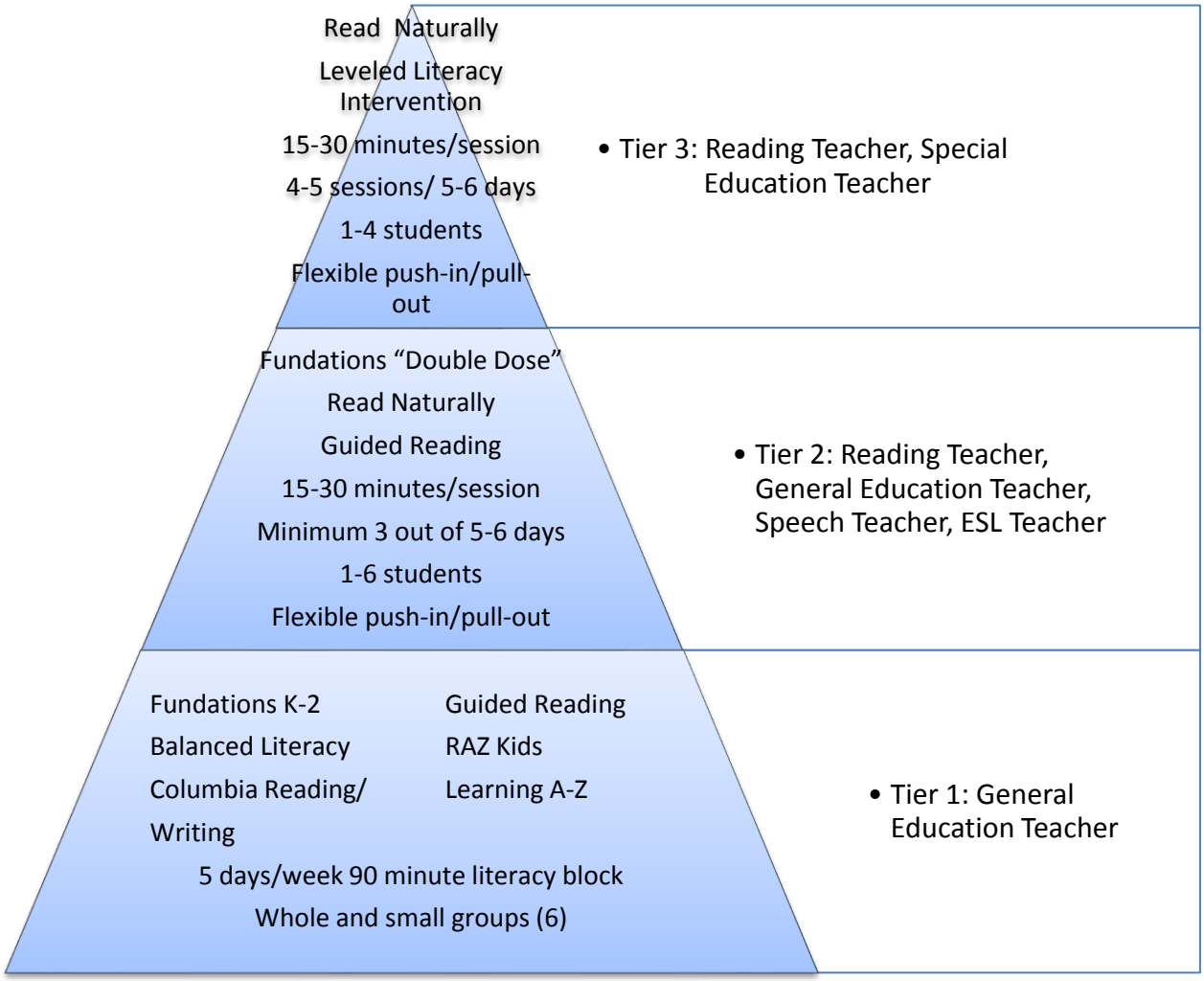
If the student is determined to be making substandard progress in such areas of study, instruction shall be provided that is tailored to meet the student's individual needs with increasingly intensive levels of targeted intervention and instruction.

School districts must provide written notification to parents when a student requires an intervention beyond that which is provided to the general education classroom. Such notification shall include: information about the performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided; strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and the parents' right to request an evaluation by the Committee on Special Education to determine whether the student has a disability.

An RtI process as described above will meet the section 117.3 requirements to ensure a student's progress toward meeting the State's standards.

SECTION 2: RTI AS A MULTI-TIERED PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

RtI is a multi-tiered prevention model with increasing levels or tiers of instructional support. Within the Beacon City School District's RTI Model, a three-tiered model is used. The graphic presented below provides a visual illustration of the district's Elementary literacy RtI model. Further information for each tier follows the graphic.



Tier One Intervention

Tier One is considered the primary level of intervention in the Beacon City School District's Elementary Schools and always takes place in the general education classroom. Tier 1 involves appropriate instruction in reading delivered to all students in the general education classroom, delivered by qualified personnel in large and small group settings and one-to-one conferring. The following matrix provides details on the nature of Tier One Intervention in Beacon's Elementary Schools.

Tier One Intervention					
Grade	**Core Program**	**Interventionist**	**Frequency**	**Duration**	**Location**

K - 2	• Fundations Wilson Language Basics (K-2)
	  ○ Print, alphabet awareness, phonological awareness
	  ○ Phonemic awareness
	  ○ Decoding
	  ○ Vocabulary
	  ○ Fluency
	  ○ Spelling
	• Balanced Literacy Instruction
	• Guided Reading
	• Columbia Reading/Writing Project
	• RAZ Kids
	• Learning A-Z
	• Florida Center for Reading Research strategies - http://www.fcrr.org/
	• Intervention Central strategies http://www.interventioncentral.org/
		General Education Teacher	5 days/week	90 minute literacy block
				
				Whole group
				
				Small group (6)
				
				1:1 Conference
					General Education Classroom

3-5	• Balanced Literacy • Guided Reading • Columbia Reading/Writing Project • Florida Center for Reading Research strategies - http://www.fcrr.org/ • Intervention Central strategies http://www.interventioncentral.org/	General Education Teacher	5 days/week	90 minute literacy block Whole group Small group (6) 1:1 Conference	General Education Classroom

Description of Core Instruction

The Common Core Standards and the New York State RTI Regulations require evidence-based instruction in the Five Pillars of literacy:

1. phonemic awareness
2. phonics
3. vocabulary
4. fluency
5. comprehension

All five pillars of reading skills are taught in Beacon's elementary school classrooms through the practices and strategies of

- Fundations
- Balanced Literacy
- Columbia Reading and Writing Project
- New York State ELA Curriculum Modules (http://engageny.org/resource/common-core-toolkit

Implementing a complete, sequential, systematic early literacy program is a research-recommended practice to reduce gaps in instructional content and variances in skill development that can increase the numbers of students who struggle with reading. Comprehensive early literacy programs are also recommended to improve achievement in English language learners and students with disabilities.

In order to align instruction in Early Literacy instruction across the district, during the 2012-2013 school year Beacon's four elementary schools expanded on a pilot program by implementing Fundations as its systematic whole-class decoding program in all K-2 classrooms.

The following reading skill components are part of the comprehensive early literacy instruction provided through the Fundations program (http://www.fundations.com).

- Print, alphabet awareness, phonological awareness
- Phonemic awareness
- Decoding
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Spelling

Evidence Base

Balanced Literacy and Columbia Reading and Writing Project

Support for the practices of Balanced Literacy is found in reading research that spans decades. In addition to the resources listed at the end of this document, research supporting the Columbia Project can be found at http://readingandwritingproject.com/about/research-base.html.

Balanced Literacy instruction and the Columbia Reading and Writing practices have the following characteristics:

- Students learn to read authentic literature from a wide variety of genres and across all content areas.
- Reading instructional materials are leveled and matched to students' instructional and independent levels.
- Continuous instructional assessment informs teachers' instructional decisions.
- Students become good writers through a comprehensive writing process that is integrated with reading in holistic literacy instruction.
- Language arts and phonics skills are taught explicitly and within the context of authentic literature.
- Students are taught metacognitive, self-monitoring, fix-up, and scaffolding strategies to develop independence in comprehension and complex thinking skills.
- Oral reading, listening skills, comprehension and complex thinking skills are developed through multiple structures:
    - shared reading
    - guided reading
    - independent reading
    - one-on-one instruction
    - conferencing.

Fundations – Wilson Language Basics

Fundations was developed for comprehensive whole classroom instruction in Early Literacy skills in grades K-3. When implemented with fidelity, Fundations implements the recommendations of the National Reading Panel, New York State RTI guidelines, and the Common Core Standards requiring schools to provide direct, explicit, sequenced instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Studies of Fundations' include the following:

Florida Center for Reading Research Reports
http://www.wilsonlanguage.com/PDF/FCRR_Fundations_Report.pdf
The Wilson Reading System, Fundations, and Wilson Fluency® / Basic were reviewed by the FCRR research committee. The reports outline how the programs are aligned with research and list their strengths and weaknesses. No weaknesses were noted for any of these programs.

Haan Foundations' Power4Kids' "Closing the Reading Gap" (2003-2007)
This study met scientifically rigorous design standards. The investigators, who focused on word-

level skills only in their examination of the Wilson Reading System, reported statistically significant effects in the area of alphabetics (representation of spoken sounds by means of letters). The statistical significance of these findings was confirmed by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

New York State Common Core Standards

The research base on which the Common Core Standards are based can be found at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf.

Differentiation strategies

When students struggle within core instruction, teachers implement a variety of strategies to support their advancement, and monitor their progress. For example:

• Pre-assessment • Providing explicit systematic instruction • Flexible grouping for instruction • Leveled reading grouping • Choice boards (by interest/learning style)	• Learning centers • Learning contracts • Leveled tasks • Cooperative learning structures • Rubrics

Check for fidelity: Monthly grade-level meetings and administrative classroom walkthroughs are used to evaluate implementation fidelity of Beacon's core reading program.

Considerations of Core Program for English Language Learners

Teachers in Beacon City School District's elementary schools collaborate with ESL teachers to provide culturally responsive instruction and scaffolded instructional support within core classroom instruction for students whose first language is not English. Research recommends that

- Teachers must know the student's levels of language proficiency in their first language (L1) and second language (L2).
- Teachers must provide curriculum that is culturally relevant: curriculum reflects the backgrounds, culture, and experiences of the students. "The child's language and culture are viewed as strengths upon which to build an education, rather than as liabilities."
- An instructional match must be established between the demands of the curriculum and the student's current level of proficiency in the language of instruction.
- It is essential to examine the achievement of true peers – students with similar language proficiencies, culture, and experiential background. If multiple "true peers" are struggling, instruction for the entire group of students must be examined.
- Consideration is given to the educational background of the ELL student
- Families are encouraged to be engaged in supporting second language acquisition
- Realistic progress goals are set in light of prior language acquisition.

Brown, J.E. and Doolittle, J. (2008). NCCREST. *A cultural, linguistic, and ecological framework for response to intervention with English language learners*

RSE-TASC Walk-Through Tool (2012)

Among the practices and strategies recommended by the research for English Language Learners, the following are implemented within core instruction through collaboration between classroom teachers, ESL teachers, and reading teachers.

• Collaboration between teachers and ESL teachers regarding the curriculum • Small group instruction & purposeful groupings: peer-pairing ELLs with proficient English speakers, and proficient native language speakers • Building knowledge & connecting prior knowledge • Explaining idioms • Instruction in the same topic using leveled text • Pictures, drawings, charts, and other visual aids • Celebration of multicultural holidays • Explicit instruction in English language structure • Repetition and rehearsal strategies such as flash cards, word rings • Personal bilingual glossaries, picture vocabulary supports • Classifying words/objects	• 3-5 seconds wait time for processing • Extra time to complete work • Allowing yes/no/short answer responses • Retelling to a peer, teacher, or tape recorder • Total physical response • Teaching high-frequency and sight words • Cloze exercises • Information gap exercises • Repeated reading • Think alouds • Readers' theater, especially with props • Use of gestures and motions in instruction • Predictable consistent routines and procedures • Manipulatives & concrete objects • Multisensory instruction: verbal, tactile/kinesthetic, visual, auditory • Poetry, songs, and games to teach language • Modifying assignments • Native language materials
Assessment Considerations	
• Set up grading contract with manageable goals • Use cloze procedure • Picture matching, demonstration of content, concepts for students to show what they know	• Expect invented spelling and awkward sentence structure • Allow extra time to complete work and tests

Tier Two Intervention

Within the Beacon City School District, Tier Two intervention is typically small group, supplemental instruction. Supplemental instruction is provided **in addition to, and not in place of core literacy instruction** students receive in Tier 1. Instruction provided at this tier is designed to address the needs or weaknesses of the student relative to the reading process.

Tier Two literacy intervention is provided by the professional with expertise matched to the needs of the student. Intervention is provided by the General Education Teacher, Reading Teachers, Speech and Language Teachers, and ESL Teachers.

Intervention details follow.

Tier Two Supplemental Literacy Intervention						
Grade	**Program Options**	**Interventionist**	**Frequency**	**Duration**	**Location**	**Group Size**
K	• Fundations "Double Dose" • Guided Reading	Reading Teacher & Literacy TA Classroom Teacher Speech Teacher ESL Teacher	At least 3 days out of a 5-6 day cycle	15-30 minutes outside the 90- minute literacy block	Push-in & pull-out (flexible)	1-6
1-2	• Fundations "Double Dose" • Guided Reading • Read Naturally Fluency Program • Leveled Literacy Intervention (grade 2)	Reading Teacher & Literacy TA Classroom Teacher Speech Teacher ESL Teacher	At least 3 days out of a 5-6 day cycle	12-45 min. outside the 90- minute literacy block	Push-in & pull-out (flexible)	1-6
3-5	• Guided Reading • Read Naturally Fluency Program • Leveled Literacy Intervention (grade 3)	Reading Teacher & Literacy TA Classroom Teacher Speech Teacher ESL Teacher	At least 3 days out of a 5-6 day cycle	15-45 min. outside the 90- minute literacy block	Push-in & pull-out (flexible)	1-6

Considerations of Tier 2 Intervention/Instruction for English Language Learners

Tier 2 interventions listed above are provided to English Language Learners by the professional with the expertise most matched to the priority needs of the student as determined by progress-monitoring assessment. When language acquisition is the root cause of a student's struggles, mandated ESL services already being delivered may be considered the most appropriate intervention. If a student is not progressing as expected in ESL services when compared to their true peers, the RTI Team must engage in additional considerations including the ESL provider in examinations of interventions such as:

- Continued/revised ESL collaboration with the classroom teacher regarding curriculum supports
- Ensuring that ESL services have been uninterrupted and given sufficient time to yield results as measured by the DRA and AIMSWEB
- Small group, "double dose", targeted skill instruction provided by the classroom teacher or by a specialist (ESL, speech and language, reading, or special education teacher)
- Progress-monitoring in light of language acquisition in both native language and second language.

Multi-sensory, multi-modal, multi-genre language intervention is provided by ESL teachers. Examples of such intervention include:

• English With a Beat • My ABC Alphabet • Hooked on Phonics • Whole brain teaching • Essay writing frames and checklists	• Scholastic News with videos • Picture Dictionaries • Wilson and Fundations • Dolch and Fry words

The following specific computer-based intervention programs are used by ESL teachers:

• Starfall.com • Read Naturally • StoryCove.com – leveled readers with video support • SuperSpeed	• RAZ Kids • ixl.com math) • Earobics • Successmaker (ELA and math)

Tier Three Intervention

Tier Three is designed for those students who have been unresponsive to or have not made adequate progress in Tier Two interventions or who demonstrate such significant needs that intensive intervention is warranted. Tier Three intervention is characterized by increased frequency and/or intensity. The following matrix provides details on the nature of Tier Three intervention in Beacon City School District's Elementary Schools.

Tier Three Literacy Intervention						
Grade	**Program Options**	**Interventionist**	**Frequency**	**Duration**	**Location**	**Group Size**
K-2	• Fundations "Double Dose" • Read Naturally Fluency Program • Leveled Literacy Intervention (grade 2)	Reading Teacher	At least 4-5 days in a 5-6 day cycle	15-30 min.	Flexible setting	1-6
3-5	• Fundations "Double Dose" • Read Naturally Fluency Program • Leveled Literacy Intervention (grade 3)	Reading Teacher	At least 4-5 days in a 5-6 day cycle	15-30 min.	Flexible setting	1-6

Considerations of Tier 3 Intervention/Instruction for English Language Learners

Tier 3 interventions listed above are provided to English Language Learners as needed by the student, determined by progress-monitoring assessment. Intervention is provided by ESL teachers and additional providers. Tier 3 considerations include:

- Continued/revised ESL collaboration with the classroom teacher regarding curriculum supports
- Additional opportunity to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing of specific skills and targeted vocabulary specific to the ELL's needs.

- Providing the opportunity to finish classroom work with the ESL teacher, where the focus is ELA or content language.
- Change in frequency/intensity of Tier 2 interventions
- Additional interventions.

SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT WITHIN AN RTI FRAMEWORK

In an RtI framework a variety of assessments are used to support decisions about a student's at-risk status, nature of instruction needed, and the student's response to instruction. Assessment types include universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments. Each assessment type is used at a different point in the RtI process for a different purpose.

Screening

Screening is an assessment procedure characterized by brief, efficient, repeatable testing of age-appropriate academic skills (e.g. identifying letters of the alphabet or reading a list of high frequency words) or behaviors. Screenings are conducted for the purposes of initially identifying students who are "at-risk" for academic failure and who may require closer monitoring, further assessment, and/or supplemental instruction.

The following table provides descriptive information regarding the universal screening procedures used at Beacon City School District Elementary Schools.

Screening Assessments			
Grades	**Assessment(s)**	**Frequency/Schedule**	**Administrator(s)**
K-5	AIMSWEB	3 times/year	Classroom teacher
K-5	DRA2	2-4 times/year	Classroom teacher
K-5	Teachers' College Reading Assessments (Fountas & Pinnell)	As needed	Classroom teacher
K	Letter identification	As needed	Intervention provider & Classroom teacher
K	Color/shape identification	As needed	Classroom teacher
1-2	Sound identification	As needed	Classroom teacher
K-2	Sight words	3 times/year	Classroom teacher

Schedule of Screening Assessments

The following Screening Assessment Schedule is provided to detail the nature of formal screening assessment per grade level at multiple intervals across the school year.

Universal Screening by Grade & Benchmarking Periods			
Grade	**Fall (September)**	**Winter (Jan/Feb)**	**Spring (May/June)**
Kindergarten	LSF + LNF	LSF + LNF + NWF + PSF	LSF + LNF + NWF + PSF
First Grade	LSF + LNF + NWF + PSF	NWF + PSF + RCBM	NWF + PSF + RCBM
Second Grade	RCBM	RCBM	RCBM + Maze
Third through Fifth Grades	RCBM + Maze	RCBM + Maze	RCBM + Maze

Screening Glossary

LSF = letter sound fluency
LNF = letter name fluency
NWF =nonsense word fluency
PSF = phoneme segmentation fluency
RCBM = reading curriculum based measurement
Maze = multiple choice cloze assessment of comprehension

Considerations for Screening or Benchmark Assessments for English Language Learners

Additional assessment may be needed to determine the risk-status of students whose native language is not English. For example, special consideration must be given to students' performance in their native language. Students with strong native language literacy skills may require different instructional supports than students with weak native language literacy skills. Collecting language proficiency data in addition to using the reading screening measures may help to determine the extent and kind of reading and language support students will need to meet important reading goals (NCRTI, 2010).

Working with New York State's Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN), Beacon City School District has determined that the screening tools described above for all students are appropriate assessments to determine an ELL student's present acquisition of the English language, and to plan

appropriate instruction. If additional assessment is needed in an individual case, RBE-RN will assist in accessing such an assessment

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is the practice of assessing student performance using assessments on a repeated basis to determine how well a student is responding to instruction. Data obtained from progress monitoring can (1) determine a student's rate of progress (2) provide information on the effectiveness of the intervention and whether to modify the intervention, and (3) identify the need for further or additional information. Progress monitoring data is also used to determine a student's movement through Tiers. The intensity of instruction/intervention will determine the frequency of progress monitoring.

The Beacon City School District's elementary schools use AIMSWEB as the primary progress-monitoring tool to examine a student's rate of progress and level of performance over time. Additional instructional assessments are used to give a more complete picture of the student's progress and to inform instructional decisions about what the student needs next. The following table provides information regarding progress monitoring procedures within Tiers 1, 2, and 3 in Beacon's elementary schools.

Progress-Monitoring Assessments				
Grades	Assessments	**Tiers**	Frequency	Administrator(s)
K-5	AIMSWEB	1-3	3 x year	Classroom, resource, reading teachers
K-2	Fundations Program Assessments	1-3	weekly	Classroom teachers
K-5	DRA2	1-3	As needed for below-grade-level readers	Classroom teachers
K-5	DRA 2 Progress Monitoring Assessment	2-3	As needed for below-grade-level readers	Reading teachers
K-1	Letter name fluency, letter sound fluency, phoneme sound fluency, nonsense sound fluency	1-3	Weekly, bi-weekly	Classroom teachers
K-5	Teacher checklists	1-3	Weekly	AIS teacher
K-2	Fundations Fluency – words/min	1-3	As needed for below grade-level readers	AIS teacher
K-5	Running record	1-3		AIS & classroom
K-5	Conferencing 1:1	1-3		AIS & classroom
K-5	RAZ Kids/ A-Z multiple choice comprehension questions	1-3		Classroom teacher

Considerations for Progress Monitoring for English Language Learners

Working with New York State's Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN), Beacon City School District has confirmed that the progress-monitoring tools described above for all students are appropriate assessments to monitor ELL students' progress, and to plan appropriate instruction. If an ELL student is not progressing as expected and the RTI Team determines that an assessment in the student's native language is needed to compare language acquisition in L1 and L2, RBE-RN will assist in accessing such an assessment

Diagnostic Assessments

Screening and progress monitoring tools occasionally provide sufficient information to plan instruction, but most often their quick samples of student performance do not provide sufficiently in-depth information about a student's specific skills. Assessments that are diagnostic in nature provide greater detail about individual students' skills and instructional needs. They provide educators with information that informs the "what to teach" and the "how to teach." Some, such as the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA), are administered to all students to guide teachers' instructional decisions about literacy instruction. Others such as the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test are administered to students who fall significantly behind an established benchmark or have not demonstrated sufficient progress.

SECTION 4: DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING

A key component of an RtI framework is the use of data to inform educational decision-making at the individual student, classroom, and school levels. Benchmark/screening assessments and progress monitoring data inform decisions relative to risk status, level and type of interventions needed to help individual students make progress.

Within an RtI framework, two major decisions are made relative to student performance:

1. Which student's may be at-risk for academic failure?
2. How well is the student responding to supplemental, tiered instruction/intervention?

Determining Initial Risk Status

To determine which students may be at-risk, Beacon City School District's Elementary Schools use data obtained from benchmark/screening assessments as well as other sources. The following table provides information about the nature of this decision.

Determining Who's At-Risk	
Primary Data Sources:	AIMSWEB DRA 2 Fundations Program Assessments
Secondary Data Sources:	DRA 2 Word Analysis Common assessments NYS ELA Assessment Report Card (current and historical) Attendance & Behavior Data
Purposes:	• Identify students who are struggling/at risk • Identify the level of intervention a student requires • Provide preliminary information about the effectiveness of core instruction at Tier 1
Who's Involved:	Classroom teacher Principal Grade-level team
Frequency:	Benchmarking occurs 3 times per year. Benchmarking meetings are held one week after benchmark assessments are administered.
Decision Options and Criteria:	For students below grade-level benchmark, interventions are planned for groups of students and/or students are reviewed by the RTI Team.

Determining Student Response to Intervention

Once a student is engaged in a literacy intervention, the RtI Team uses data to determine how the student is responding to the intervention. The Beacon City School District Elementary Schools use progress monitoring data and other instructional data sources to examine the student's level of performance, rate of progress over time and to make informed decisions about what the student needs. The table presented below provides further information regarding the nature of this decision.

Determining Student Response to Intervention			
Primary Data Sources:	AIMSWEB DRA 2		
Secondary Data Sources:	Fundations Program Assessment Read Naturally Assessment Classroom instructional assessments		
Purposes:	• Determine student's response to the intervention • Determine if the student is making progress towards grade level benchmarks • Determine the need for a less or more intensive intervention		
Who's Involved:	RTI Team: • General Education Teacher • The student's teacher • Special Education Teacher • Reading Teacher • Principal	Ad Hoc Members: • School psychologist • Social Worker • Speech/Language Teacher • Occupational Therapist	
Frequency of Decisions per Tier:	**Tier 1**	**Tier 2**	**Tier 3**
	5 Weeks	10 weeks	10 weeks
Decision Options and Criteria:	**Positive response:** • Continue or end • Monitor progress **Inadequate response:** • Change intervention Or • Move to Tier 2	**Positive response:** • Continue, move to Tier 1 or end • Monitor progress **Inadequate response:** • Change intervention • Consider more diagnostic assessment • Move to Tier 3	**Positive response:** • Continue, move to Tier 1,2, or end • Monitor progress **Inadequate response:** • Change intervention • Consider comprehensive educational evaluation for special education services

LD Determination

Effective on and after July 1, 2012, a school district must have an RtI process in place as it may no longer use the severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability to determine that a student in kindergarten through grade four has a learning disability in the area of reading. In making a determination of eligibility for special education under the classification of LD, the CSE must determine that a student's academic underachievement is not due to the lack of appropriate instruction in reading. Appendix A includes an SED approved form for LD documentation purposes.

In Beacon's Elementary Schools, during Tier 3 intervention, prior to requesting a psycho-educational assessment, the RTI Team will engage in the following examinations to determine the appropriate course of action on behalf of the student:

- Examine the sufficiency of interventions
  (e.g. intense targeted pull-out intervention for at least 10 weeks)
- Analyze multiple (3-4) data points
- Consider the degree of discrepancy and rate of progress
- Observe the student in the classroom
- Consider achievement testing (WIAT 3)

SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Part 100.2(ii)(3) requires each school district take "appropriate steps to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement a RtI program and that such program is implemented consistent with…" the specific structure and components of the RtI process selected by the school district.

The Beacon City School District has provided professional development to staff members regarding the RTI Process through the administrators and RTI Teams at each building. Building teams will deliver updated RTI process informational presentations regarding this RTI Plan. In addition, the RTI Literacy committees have recommended professional development in the following areas related to the skills necessary to implement Beacon's Response to Intervention Plan.

Cross district communication meetings for RTI Team Leaders and reading/literacy teachers, to ensure:

- Alignment of the vision, purpose, processes, assessments, data analysis, interventions, documentation and communication across the district
- Aligned evaluation of the results of the district's RTI System
- Aligned staff & parent informational presentations across the district
- Timely and efficient transition of students' intervention records between schools

- Recognition of RTI successes and cross-district collaborative problem-solving of RTI systems struggles.

Research-Recommended Literacy Practices K-5 and 6-12 – turn-key training of essential literacy strategies compiled into a teacher manual by the District Literacy Committee.

Teaching English Language Learners – collaborate with RBE-RN to continue to provide all teachers with strategies to meet the needs of English Language Learners in every classroom.

Differentiating Instruction – collaborate with BOCES to provide professional development in meeting the diverse needs of students in classrooms at every grade level.

RTI Team training – provide cross-district professional development in the processes involved in serving effectively as a member of an RTI team.

SECTION 6: PARENT NOTIFICATION

In the Beacon City School District, parents are notified when their child requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend Response to Intervention (RTI) Committee meetings to participate in developing and reviewing intervention plans. When an intervention plan is developed for a student, parents are informed via letter of the details of the intervention plan. Appendix B includes a sample letter that indicates:

- The nature of the intervention their child will be receiving
    - Type of intervention
    - Strategies for improving the student's rate of learning
    - Frequency
    - Duration
    - Interventionist
    - Location
- The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected
    - Type of data
    - Screening tool
    - Frequency of progress-monitoring
- RTI meeting date to review progress
- Their right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

Considerations for Parents Whose Native Language is Not English: For parents whose native language is not English the Beacon City School District attempts to provide native language communications.

Appendix A

Documentation of the Determination of Eligibility for a Student Suspected of Having a Learning Disability

Source: *Response to Intervention - Guidance for New York State School Districts* (October 2010), Minimum Requirements of a Response to Intervention Program (RtI), Appendix B, The University of the State of New York, State Education Department. http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/guidance/cover.htm

Section 200.4(j)(5) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education requires that the committee on special education (CSE) prepare a written report of the determination of eligibility of a student suspected of having a learning disability that contains a statement of the following information:

1. The CSE has reviewed the individual evaluation results for _____, which indicate that the student:
   __ has a learning disability requiring special education services.
   __ does not have a learning disability.

2. This decision was based on the following sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the student's physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior in accordance with section 200.4(c)(1) of the Regulations:

3. The relevant behavior noted during the observation of the student and the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic functioning indicate:

4. The educationally relevant medical findings, if any, indicate:

5. To ensure that underachievement in a student suspected of having a learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or mathematics, the CSE must, as part of the evaluation procedures pursuant to section 200.4(b) and (c), consider:
   __ data that demonstrate that prior to, or as part of, the referral process, the student was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel.
   AND
   __ data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the student's parents.

6. The CSE has determined, consistent with section 200.4(j)(3) of the Regulations, that:
   __ the student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving;
   AND
   __ the student either does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified in this paragraph when using a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention pursuant to section 100.2(ii);
   OR
   __ exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age,

State-approved grade level standards or intellectual development that is determined by the CSE to be relevant to the identification of a learning disability, using appropriate assessments consistent with section 200.4(b).

AND

__ the student's learning difficulties are not primarily the result of a visual, hearing or motor disability; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency.

7. Complete this item if the student has participated in a process that assesses the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention.

   __ The following instructional strategies were used and student-centered data was collected:

   AND

   __ Document how parent's were notified about the amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided; strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and the parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

8. CSE Member Certification of the Determination of a Learning Disability:

   The determination of eligibility for special education for a student suspected of having a learning disability must be made by the CSE, which must include the student's regular education teacher and a person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of students (such as a school psychologist, teacher of speech and language disabilities, speech/language pathologist or reading teacher). Each CSE member must certify in writing whether the report reflects his or her conclusion. If not, the member must submit a separate statement presenting his or her conclusions.

Title	**Signature**	**Agree**	**Disagree**
District Representative			
Parent of Student			
Regular Education Teacher			
Special Education Teacher			
School Psychologist			
Parent Member			
Others: Specify			

Date:_____

APPENDIX B
Response to Intervention Parent Letter
SAMPLE

Date: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The purpose of this letter is to share information with you about the Intervention Plan that the school's Response to Intervention (RTI) Team developed to address concerns about your child's progress.

Student: _____
Teacher: _____
Date and Time of the meeting: _____
Area of concern: _____Academic _____Behavioral.
Your child will be receiving the following:

- Type of intervention:_____
- Strategies for improving the student's rate of learning:_____
  _____
- Frequency:_____
- Duration:_____
- Interventionist:_____
- Location:_____

To monitor your child's progress, we will be gathering the following student performance data:

- Type of data: _____
- Assessment tool(s):_____
- Frequency of progress-monitoring:_____

The RTI Team will meet on the following date to review your child's progress: _____

We have confidence that this intervention plan will succeed in improving your child's success in school. You do have the right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

Sincerely,

_____
Building Principal

REFERENCES

RTI References

Allington, R. (2009). *What really matters in response to intervention: Research-based designs.* Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

Allington, R. (2005). *What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research-based programs,* 2nd ed. Allyn & Bacon.

Brown, J.E. and Doolittle, J. (2008). *A cultural, linguistic, and ecological framework for response to intervention with English language learners.* National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST).

Florida Center for Reading Research. http://www.fcrr.org/

Intervention Central. http://www.interventioncentral.org/

National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI) March 2010. *Essential Components of RTI – A Closer Look at Response to Intervention.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Response to Intervention.

New York State Education Department Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support (RSE-TASC). Walk-Through Tool (2012).

New York State Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center (NYS RtI-TAC). http://www.nysrti.org/

Part 100 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education *[8 NYCRR section 100.2(ii)*]

Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education [8 NYCRR section 200.4(j)]

Response to Intervention - Guidance for New York State School Districts (October 2010), Minimum Requirements of a Response to Intervention Program (RtI), Appendix B, The University of the State of New York, State Education Department. http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/guidance/cover.htm.

Balanced Literacy References

Billmeyer, B. & Barton, M. (2002). *Teaching reading in the content area*. Aurora: McRel.

Common Core Learning Standards, CCSS, Shifts and Resources. http://engageny.org/resource/common-core-toolkit

Cunningham, P. & Allington, R.L. (2010). *Classrooms that work: They can all read and write* (5th edition). Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

Farstrup, A., & Samuels, S.J. (2002). *What research has to say about reading instruction.* International Reading Association.

Fountas, J.C., & Pinnell, G.S. (2001). *Guiding readers and writers, grades 3-6: Teaching comprehension, genre, and content literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Harvey, S., Goudvis, A. (2000*). Strategies that work: Teaching comprehension to enhance understanding*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers. http://www.heinemann.com/authors/2471.aspx

Hill, J. & Flynn, K. (2006). *Classroom instruction that works with English language learners.* Alexandria, VA, ASCD.

Jacobs, H. H. (2006). *Active literacy across the curriculum: Strategies for reading, writing, listening, and speaking*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Keene, E. O. & Zimmermann, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought: Teaching comprehension in a reader's workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Miller, D. (2002). *Reading with meaning: Teaching comprehension in the primary grades.* Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

National Institute for Literacy (2001). *Put reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read.* Jessup, MD: Author.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Research Council (1999), Burns, M., Griffin, P., and Snow, C. editors. *Starting out right. A guide to promoting children's reading success.* Washington, National Academy Press.

Pearson, P., Kamil, M., Barr, R. & Mosenthal, P. (1984) (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research*. New York: Longman.

Rasinski, T. (2010). *The Fluent Reader: Oral & silent reading strategies for building fluency, word recognition, & comprehension,* 2nd ed. New York, Scholastic.

Robb, L. (2003). *Teaching reading in social studies, science, and math*. Jefferson City: Scholastic.

Wilhelm, J.D., (2001). *Improving comprehension with think aloud strategies.* New York, NY: Scholastic.

Zimmermann, S., Hutchins, C. (2003). *7 keys to comprehension.* New York, Three Rivers Press.