

Response to Instruction and Intervention Guidebook

For Families

Thompson School District



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RtI in Colorado: Response to Instruction & Intervention

Definition, Purpose & Core Principles

Response to Intervention is a school-wide, multi-tiered, data-driven framework that allows teachers to assist any child identified as needing academic and/or behavioral support—whether they are working below grade level or are gifted and not meeting their full potential.

The overarching purpose of RtI implementation is to improve educational outcomes for ALL students.

Core Principles:

- 1) ALL children can learn and achieve high standards as a result of effective teaching.
- 2) All students must have access to a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and research-based instruction.
- 3) Intervening at the earliest indication of need is necessary for student success (Pre K-12).
- 4) A comprehensive system of tiered interventions is essential for addressing the full range of student needs.
- 5) Student results are improved when ongoing academic and behavioral performance data are used to inform instructional decisions.
- 6) Collaboration among educators, families and community members is the foundation to effective problem-solving and instructional decision-making.
- 7) Ongoing and meaningful involvement of families increases student success.
- 8) All members of the school community must continue to gain knowledge and develop expertise in order to build capacity and sustainability.
- 9) Effective leadership at all levels is crucial for the implementation of RtI.

The definition above was written to reflect the “priority elements” identified by the Colorado RTI Task Force. The principles were adapted from those given in the document, *Response to Intervention: Policy Consideration and Implementation*, NASDSE, 2005, incorporating the recommendations of the Colorado RTI Task Force. They have been further revised by the Colorado RtI Implementation Team at CDE.

Six Components of Response to Intervention

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) recognizes six areas significant to RtI Implementation. The Thompson School District developed an [Implementation Evaluation Rubric](#) to identify key activities and components in each area. The rubric is used to assist schools plan, implement and improve RtI processes. Additionally, each school's implementation status is evaluated in the spring based upon the rubric.

Leadership: Leadership at the state, district, and building level is crucial to ensuring that RtI implementation occurs. RtI is a significant change that affects the entire educational system. These changes must be championed and monitored by leaders at all levels.

Curriculum & Instruction: The RtI Model is a three-tiered system designed to meet the needs of ALL students. Curriculum, based on the state standards and quality instruction, are essential for student success.

Tier I instruction includes high quality, research-based curricula and instructional strategies that support the district's curriculum guidelines.

Tier II offers supplemental instruction in addition to the standards-based curriculum received in Tier I.

Tier III instruction includes more explicit instruction that is focused on a specific skill need, whether that be an accelerated need or a remedial need.

Problem-Solving Process: The purpose of the problem-solving process is to assist the classroom teacher and parents in designing and selecting strategies for improving student academic and/or behavioral performance. It provides a structure for addressing the academic and/or behavioral concerns identified by teachers or parents. A problem-solving process requires full collaboration among a team of professionals along with parents to identify a specific, measurable outcome and to design research-based interventions to address the concerns.

Assessment and Progress Monitoring: A major feature of the RtI Model is its use of data to drive the decision-making process at the individual student, classroom, and school levels. To support RtI's fluid approach, reliable and ongoing information must be available to:

- Identify academic and behavioral needs of individual students;
- Inform the problem-solving process;
- Design and modify instruction to meet student needs;

- Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction at different levels of the system (e.g., classroom, school, district).

Positive School Climate and Culture: The core principles of a multi-tiered RtI model support and embrace positive school climate within all school settings. Positive school climate depends on four essential elements:

1. Creating a caring school community
2. Teaching appropriate behavior and social problem-solving skills
3. Implementing positive behavior support components
4. Providing rigorous academic instruction

In the Thompson Schools, PBS (Positive Behavior Supports) is used to ensure that behavioral expectations are clear for all students and that students who need additional instruction and support with social/emotional/behavioral skills receive this support as early as possible.

Family and Community Engagement: When families, schools, and communities work together, students are more successful in school and schools improve. Effective partnerships include parents, families, students, community members and educators. Indicators of an effective partnership include 1) sharing information, 2) problem-solving and 3) celebrating student successes.

Link to [CDE "*Response to Intervention \(RtI\) – A Practitioner’s Guide to Implementation*"](#)

Adapted from Colorado Department of Education "*Response to Intervention (RtI) – A Practitioner’s Guide to Implementation.*"

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *How do students move between Tiers?*

Moving between tiers is a fluid process and there will likely be some fluctuation for many students whether they exhibit academic and/or behavioral concerns. Essentially, students move between tiers based on the gap demonstrated through progress monitoring as well as with the intensity level of the intervention.

2. *What is a Problem Solving Team?*

A Problem Solving Team is a group of teachers and school staff who meet regularly to evaluate student data, plan interventions and monitor student progress. Different staff members may be part of the team depending on the needs of the student. Parents or guardians are also encouraged to participate on the team to create an effective action plan for their child.

3. *What is an intervention?*

An intervention is an instructional strategy or curricular component used to enhance student learning. Interventions are systematic and targeted in the area of identified need and designed to improve student performance toward a measurable goal.

4. *How do I know my student is progressing?*

Response to Intervention uses short, frequent tests (about 1-3 minutes each) to find out whether a student is making progress. The results are often displayed using a graph. The graph will provide valuable information about student progress and how he or she is performing in relation to a standard benchmark.

5. *Is behavior part of RtI?*

Yes. Many students have the knowledge and skills to be successful. However, their behavior may negatively impact their academic success. All District 11 schools are implementing programs to proactively teach and reward expected behaviors in all settings (e.g., classroom, hallway, lunchroom, etc.). As a part of these programs, schools develop levels of interventions to help students monitor and improve their behavior.

6. *Is a student ever involved in more than one intervention at a time?*

Students should typically participate in one intervention at a time for individual skill deficits. In some situations a student may be participating in a standard protocol intervention such as a flexible reading group to address reading skills in general, but may also be in a more intense (Tier III) intervention to address the specific skill deficit. A student may participate in more than one intervention if there are a variety of skill deficits in different academic or behavior areas.

7. *Is RtI just a way to avoid providing special education services?*

No. RtI is a way to integrate the mandates of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and IDEA so that ALL students receive high quality, effective instruction in the general education setting and beyond. RtI is a framework of instruction for students who receive special education services. The intent is to generate a seamless system of support that is available to all students at the first sign of need.

8. *Can RtI be used for students who are Gifted and Talented and/or underachieving?*

Absolutely, not only can RtI be used, but should be used for students identified as Gifted and Talented or underachieving. Because the RtI Model is a system-wide model, all students who are making insufficient progress should be provided more intensive interventions based on their individual needs. Gifted students need strength-based tiered interventions based on programming needs. Gifted students with learning difficulties will also need interventions for skill deficits.

9. *Does the RtI Model have to be used to determine eligibility for students who are identified as having a Specific Learning Disability?*

To align with federal laws, the Colorado Department of Education revised the Exceptional Children's Education Act to utilize a problem-solving process to determine eligibility for a Specific Learning Disability. The expectation is that the majority of data are collected through the process; however, other data may need to be collected for a full and individual evaluation to qualify as having a Specific Learning Disability.

10. *How/what do we communicate to parents?*

Regardless of whether the parent initiated a concern or the teacher initiated a concern, parent involvement is critical and should be facilitated throughout the process, beginning with the problem identification phase. Parents should always be invited to the problem-solving meetings, and if parents are unable

to attend the meeting the progress monitoring information should be provided to the parents each time the data are analyzed. Parents should be involved in all the decisions regarding modifications to interventions.

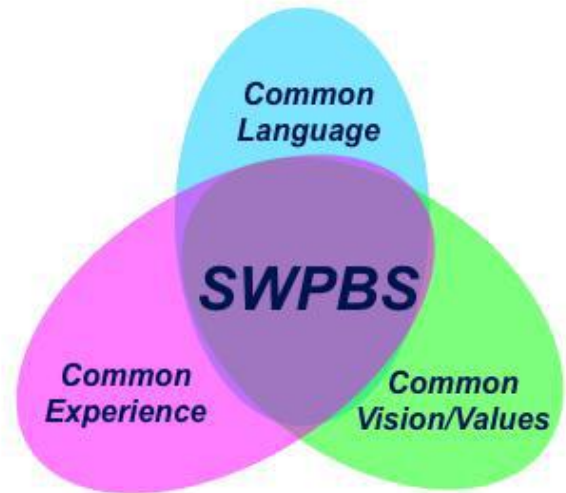
Assessment and Progress Monitoring

TSD students are assessed on an ongoing basis with a variety of tools. Universal screening takes place with all students while progress monitoring is in place for students who are in targeted and/or intensive interventions. Please see the Comprehensive Assessment Cycle Document for complete information about types of assessment, purposes of assessment, grade levels impacted and how assessments are implemented.

[TSD Comprehensive Assessment Cycle](#)

School Climate and Culture

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)



WHAT IS Positive Behavior Support (PBS)?

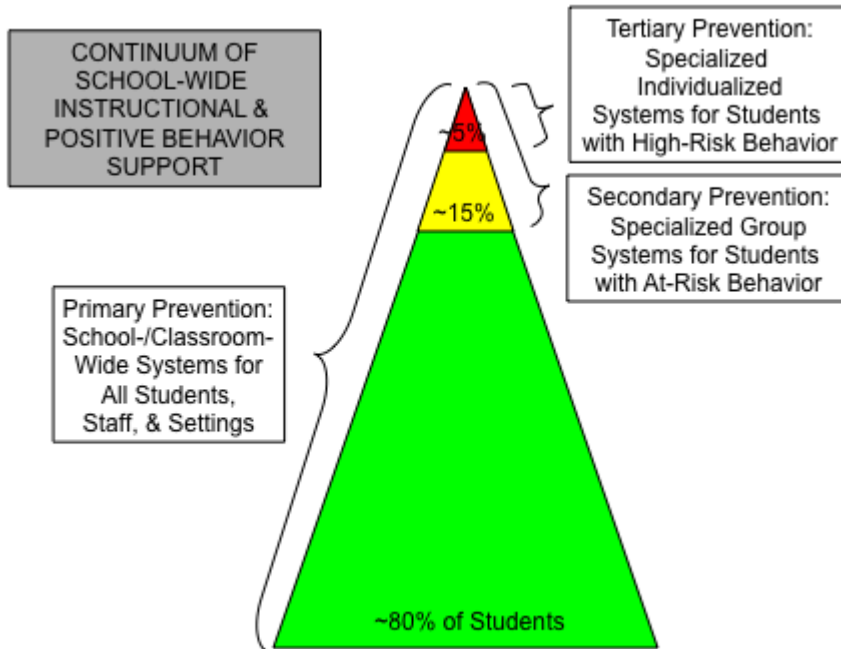
In the past, school discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehavior by implementing punishment-based strategies including reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, detentions, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that using punishment exclusively, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Teaching, modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important part of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of school-wide PBS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

A major advance in school discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments.



- Careful acknowledgement, consideration and achievement of outcomes (e.g., academic achievement, social competence, career/work opportunities) that are valued by significant stakeholders (e.g., students, family members, teachers, employers).
- Adoption and sustained use of research-validated practices and curricula that maximize achievement of student and teacher outcomes.
- Application of data-based decision-making at many levels (i.e., individual, classroom, school), with multiple individuals (i.e., student, teacher, administrator, support staff), across contexts (e.g., general vs. special education, school vs. home), and with multiple outcomes (e.g., reading, grades, attendance, discipline referrals).
- Development of systems (e.g., processes, routines, working structures, administrative supports) that are needed to ensure consideration of valued outcomes, research validated practices, and data-based decision-making.

PBS is a theory-based public health model of prevention/intervention design. The model proposes that if a treatment is effective it must significantly benefit at least 80% of the population, leaving roughly 20% of the population that needs more targeted assistance ("yellow and red zones" of the triangle). For most of this "intervention group," increasing the intensity of the original treatment, or modifying it in a substantial yet efficient manner (using smaller group sizes or a standard protocol) will positively affect approximately 15% of the original population (yellow zone); this leaves about 5% of the population that will require something more individualized, intense, and different (red zone).



Why Do We Need PBS?

- Problem behavior is the single most common reason why students are removed from regular classrooms.
- Even though students with extreme problem behavior usually represent only 5-7% of school enrollment, they can account for more than 70% of the time spent by administrators and counselors.
- Harsh punishment and zero tolerance policies have not been effective at either improving behavioral climate in schools, or preventing students with problem behaviors from entering the juvenile justice system.
- By teaching students the expected behavior, having all adults consistently reinforce it, and having PBS teams use data to design preventative systems at their schools and intervene with at-risk

students, the number of incidences of students being sent to the office has declined by nearly 35% over the last 6 years in TSD.

[PBS Board Presentation 2010](#)

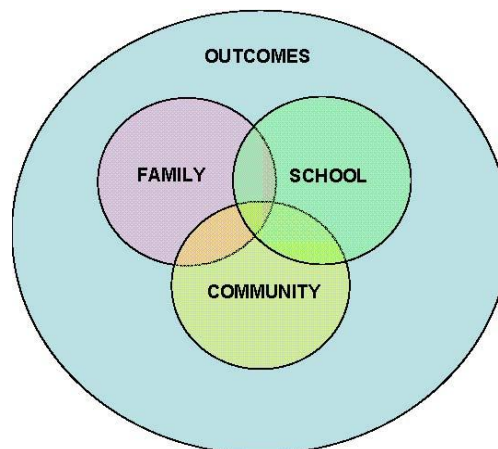
- Estimating that each incident removes students from time in instruction for at least 45 minutes, nearly 250 instructional days per year are saved since implementing PBS in the district. This means students are spending more time learning, administrators are spending more time on instructional matters, and teachers are spending more time teaching content and skills.

For more information on PBS go to:

<http://www.pbis.org/>

All Thompson School District schools:

1. Have established a school-wide PBS leadership team to guide and direct the process. This team is made up of administrators, mental health professionals, teachers, support staff, and parents.
2. Complete an annual self-assessment of the current school-wide discipline system.
3. Are assessed by an outside evaluator to see if all major components of PBS (i.e., students and staff know the school rules; rules are posted, taught, and reinforced; staff know the procedures for behaviors that are managed in the classroom versus referred to the office; and data are used for prevention and intervention planning and implementation) have been implemented with fidelity.
4. Utilize the School-wide Information System (SWIS) to collect office referral and other data on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide PBS efforts and determine who may require targeted or intensive interventions.
5. Create an annual action plan that is data-based, realistic, and meaningful and aims to increase pro-social behaviors and positive school climate.



School, Family & Community Partnerships-An important component of PBS

The link between families and positive behavioral interventions and supports is an important one. When families are meaningfully involved in educational activities, their children do better in schools. Families play an important part in their child's education and social development. The presence of parents in schools not only provides additional academic supports, but also creates community and cultural connections. In many schools, family participation in the school-wide positive behavior support process is growing. Family members are part of state, district, and school planning teams and participate in school-wide activities in a variety of ways. Family members participate in the assessment and problem solving process to create individualized positive behavior support plans for their children.

PBS Tips for Positive Behavior

- 1. Remember 5:1 with positives.**
- 2. Set the stage for success..reward the effort.**
- 3. Give clear, specific directions.**
- 4. Stay calm. Use a calm voice.**
- 5. Set reasonable limits.**
- 6. Be consistent. YES means YES and NO means NO.**
- 7. Set the example. Actions speak louder than words.**
- 8. Proactively anticipate the situation.**
- 9. Have patience. A little goes a long way!!**
- 10. Have fun and enjoy the ride!**

For more information on PBS and Family Engagement:

[Getting behavior in shape at home](#)

For more information on PBS in Colorado:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/pbs/>

Positive Behavioral Supports and the Law:

http://www.pbis.org/school/pbis_and_the_law/default.aspx

Problem Solving Process

The Problem-Solving (P-S) process is one component of the Response to Intervention model for supporting student success. The P-S process is an interdisciplinary, collaborative team process that employs a structured team-based problem-solving approach. The P-S process includes data-driven decisions, parent-school partnerships, progress monitoring checks, and research-based, prescriptive interventions.

The goal of the P-S process is to coordinate the use of resources and expertise in the schools to address individual student needs and assist in planning, implementing, and modifying interventions for students. The purpose of P-S in a school is to improve student learning in the areas of academics and behavior one student at a time.

Through the Response to Instruction/Intervention model, the P-S process allows for the utilization of resources for students prior to and in lieu of, special education services. This early intervening approach promotes the use of specific, focused assessments in order to prescribe appropriate interventions in the areas of academic and behavioral challenges displayed by individual students. Target goal(s) are set and progress toward the goal is monitored to determine success of the intervention. If the student's needs require ongoing, intensive interventions/support after an identified period of time, discussions of possible special education eligibility may be considered.

[Thompson School District Problem-Solving guidebook](#)

A problem-solving process requires full collaboration among a team of professionals along with parents to identify a specific, measurable outcome and to design research-based interventions to address the concerns. The process includes ensuring interventions are implemented with fidelity according to their research base and student progress is monitored to determine the student's response. Family engagement in the process is vital to ensure all information that might impact success is considered. The purpose of problem solving is to put in place a decision-making process that will lead to the development of instructional and intervention strategies with a high probability of success. The system must integrate the use of data, both to guide the development of effective interventions and to provide frequent monitoring of progress.

For more information

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/RtI/ProblemSolving.htm>

For additional information, please go to the following resources

http://floridarti.usf.edu/resources/tools/about_ps_rti/index.html#problemsolvingprocess

[Student Intervention Team/Problem Solving Process
Extended Step By Step Outline](#)

Determination of Eligibility for Special Education as a Student with a Specific Learning Disability

As of August 15, 2009, the Colorado Department of Education requires that an RtI process be used to determine eligibility for special education services as a student with an SLD. The Thompson School District developed a guidebook to assist education teams in making this determination.

[Thompson School District SLD Guidebook](#)