

Hancock County School District Response to Intervention Plan

Introduction

It is the mission of the Hancock County School System to provide a meaningful educational experience for the students of our county by providing a broad-based curriculum reflecting our community, our parents, and our students' needs and by encouraging the students to reach their highest potential in becoming productive and responsible lifelong learners.

It is the mission of Hancock County Elementary and Hancock County Middle/High Schools to provide a safe environment for our students. In cooperation with parents and community, we strive to develop healthy lifestyles. We will provide a quality and through education to enable our students to become productive, knowledgeable, and responsible citizens.

It is our vision to 'enriching tomorrow by learning today'. Teachers strive to create innovative and high quality lessons for students to enrich their learning experience.

We have developed strategies to use in our Response to Intervention Plan, and hope to provide students with opportunities to succeed in school by using a universal screening instrument to identify students with learning problems, and ensure they receive appropriate instruction and support. The Hancock County Schools' RTI process is a three tiered approach which integrates research-based, high-quality teaching and assessment methods in a systematic way. Students who are not successful when presented with one set of instructional methods can be given the chance to succeed with the use of other intervention strategies. When implemented with fidelity, RTI can identify and intervene for struggling students early in the educational process thus reducing academic failure and promoting academic success. Our goal is to identify students in need of help, provide a three-tiered intervention that is research-based and monitor student progress to determine if the interventions are working or if the student should be reevaluated and interventions changed.

Response to Intervention

General Procedures

Academic Area

Reading

Describe staff resources configuration:

The RTI process is a function of the regular education program. A Reading Intervention/Literacy Support Team has been developed to aid the RTI process. This team will be modified yearly to meet the needs of Hancock County Elementary and Hancock County Middle/High School staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Curriculum & Instruction Supervisor/Federal Programs Director:

- Oversee development and revision of the system-wide RTI Plan as needed.
- Determine the system-wide universal screening and monitoring tools as well as approve intervention strategies.
- Ensure fidelity of RTI implementation.
- Provide appropriate funding in conjunction with Special Education Supervisor when necessary to support RTI needs.

Special Education Supervisor:

- Coordinate personnel and resources to assist in implementation and functioning of the RTI process.
- Consult with the Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction in matters related to IDEA and special education assessment.
- Provide appropriate funding in conjunction with regular the education program when necessary to support RTI needs.

Principal:

- Designate personnel and resources to assist in implementation and functioning for the RTI process to include special education, support staff and teacher assistants.
- Oversee the RTI Program to assure fidelity in screenings, progress monitoring, and observations. Provide documentation of implementation through fidelity observations with feedback for teachers by principal or designee.
- Train testing team for STAR Enterprise benchmark assessment.
- Monitor instructional fidelity and implementation of the interventions.
- Maintain Tier Rosters and Intervention forms for two years.
- Participate in Student Intervention RTI Team Meetings.

Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coach:

- Designate and modify a Reading Intervention/Literacy Support Team yearly.
- Analyze and interpret data used in the RTI process.
- Maintain a benchmark and progress monitoring notebook/file.

- Train staff on Progress Monitoring Assessments.
- Assist with benchmark assessment when necessary.
- Train teachers and staff to ensure implementation of instructional strategies with fidelity.

Reading Interventionist:

- Assist in implementing and monitoring the RTI Program.
- Assist in providing interventions for students in Tier III.
- Act as a member of the school RTI Team.
- Assist with benchmark assessment when necessary.

Classroom Teacher:

- Maintain student RTI folders.
- Keep Tier Rosters and turn in to principal monthly.
- Oversee progress-monitoring assessment to students in classroom.
- Implement a daily 90-minute uninterrupted reading block.
- Provide whole group instruction, small reading group instruction and individualized differentiated literacy “best-practices” in center activities.
- Instruct with fidelity and effectiveness.
- Complete any paperwork needed, including the referral process.

School Reading Intervention/Literacy Support Team:

- Identify students needing interventions based on the universal screenings, teacher referrals, and other data such as observations and formative and summative assessments provided by teachers.
- Provide process to be utilized to resolve issues, problems or concerns related to the achievement of students identified by formative assessments.
- Review progress monitoring and benchmarks of at-risk students.
- Develop student follow-up plans.
- Identify students that should be referred for special education eligibility.

Members who might serve on the district RTI Team are:

- Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction/Federal Programs Director (Chairman)
- Special Education Director
- Principal
- Assistant Principals
- Curriculum Coaches
- Parent

Describe Your Universal Screening Procedures:

Grades: K-12

Students in grades K-12 are given a universal screening measure entitled STAR Enterprise as a benchmark assessment. Screenings will be given in grades K-12, all students will be screened three times per year – in August, December, and May. The classroom teacher will administer benchmark assessments in the computer lab, with the

assistance of the computer lab specialist and other paraprofessionals as needed. The assessment results will be analyzed, and students identified as students at risk of academic failure will be assigned to Tier II and Tier III as needed on an individual basis. Teacher recommendations with appropriate documentation will also be used to place students in an intervention Tier.

Number of Tiers to be used:

Three Tiers will be used according to the following scale:

Tier I – Regular 90 minute reading block of classroom instruction

Tier II – Regular 90 minute reading block of classroom instruction; additional 30 minutes with an interventionist.

Tier III – Regular 90 minute reading block of classroom instruction; additional 60 minutes with an interventionist or designee/Learning Lab.

How often are grade-level teams going to meet:

Grade level teams meet with curriculum coach on a bi-weekly basis. Discussion after every benchmark assessment, at the end of the six-week/nine-week grading period and/or when a change of placement is being considered will be held during the bi-weekly meeting or at an appropriate time.

What is the procedure for students who enter school mid-term:

Any student who enters school after the beginning date will be administered the Universal Screener and begin benchmark testing with the next scheduled test date. All records of the entering student will be reviewed. Student records will be obtained from the previous school through fax or by mail and phone calls will be placed to gain pertinent information about the child's achievement level if necessary. Parents will be notified, and an intervention team meeting will be scheduled to review the data and determine the best education plan if it is determined that the student is at risk. If the student falls below current grade level in reading they will begin Tier II or III.

When will school staff contact parents:

Parents will be notified at the beginning of the school year that all K-12 students will be given a benchmark assessment three times during the school year. Parents will be contacted after each universal screening with results, and before initiating and discontinuing each level of intervention. Progress monitoring reports will be sent home every two weeks to parents of Tier II students and every week to parents of students in Tier III requiring parent signature on a progress log for the appropriate TIER. Parents will be notified and an intervention team meeting scheduled to review the data and determine the best educational plan for students that have not made adequate progress. When referral for special education is being considered, the parents will be contacted and included in RTI school support team decisions.

Tier I

Describe core reading curriculum by grade:

All classroom teachers in grades K-12 will follow the Reading/Language Arts Curriculum Standards established by the Tennessee State Standards and the Tennessee

Department of Education. The core-reading program should enable the majority of students to attain grade-level or above reading goals.

The K-12 instructional program will:

- Implement a daily uninterrupted reading block.
- Provide instruction in the five components of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension.
- Deliver instruction in a direct, explicit, and systematic manner adhering to the fidelity of the program.
- Provide ample practice opportunities to allow students to demonstrate what they are learning with immediate feedback.
- Differentiate instruction according to individual student needs by using small group activities such as leveled readers and using leveled center activities.
- Monitor and document student academic growth weekly.
- Provide whole group instruction, small group instruction, and differentiated literacy strategies grounded in reading “best practices” through group projects and centers.

Examples of literacy strategies include but are not limited to: partner reading, literacy centers, writing projects, reading skills, vocabulary activities, and independent practice or student grouping in related content areas such as science.

- Provide small group direct instruction that will enable the teacher to provide direct, explicit instruction that he/she can reinforce, re-teach, provide intervention to close achievement gaps or provide academic enhancement. Time spent in small group is based on student needs and performance.
- Maintain effective classroom management.
- Provide instruction based on student data.

Describe staff training and staff development for core curriculum in each academic area being implemented:

- Professional development will be ongoing and provided regularly on researched-based methods and strategies in reading within the five components of reading. Strategies and methods include but are not limited to differentiated instruction, reading center activities, and reading across the curriculum.
- We are currently working with the CORE Office personnel who will be providing training on center based learning and fidelity checks.
- Teachers will be provided initial training and updated yearly on the Reading/LA Curriculum Standards and the transition to Tennessee State Standards along with the instructional strategies needed to teach by the Curriculum Coaches during team meetings.
- Teachers will model lessons in the five components of reading to demonstrate appropriate instructional strategies.
- Textbook representatives will conduct training on the proper use of the adopted reading program.
- Grade/subject level learning communities will hold bi-weekly meetings to plan together, to share successful reading strategies, to discuss the reading pacing guide, and to discuss any problems that teachers may have.

- Continue PD and trainings of RTI in the area of Literacy.
- New teachers will receive training addressing topics including reading strategies, classroom management skills and training in the evaluation process and be assigned a mentor teacher.
- Training will also be provided on the Accelerated Reading (STAR) and other computer based programs.

Describe types of instructional practices for each academic area being implemented (small group, learning centers, peer tutoring):

A variety of instructional practices by teacher choice will be used during the reading block such as but not limited to whole group, small group, and differentiated instruction with flexible grouping and literacy centers.

Whole group instruction will last approximately 30 minutes and will provide the teacher an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary and concepts or review and reinforce previously taught material and concepts.

Small group instruction will enable the teacher to provide direct, explicit instruction, and he/she can reinforce, re-teach, provide intervention to close achievement gaps or provide academic enhancement. Time spent in small group is based on student needs and performance and will usually last an hour or more in designated increments for center rotation.

Examples of literacy strategies are: partner reading, literacy centers, writing projects, reading skills, vocabulary activities, independent or group work in related content areas. The goal is to cover the 5 components of reading on a daily basis (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension).

Progress-monitoring procedures:

All students will be progress monitored monthly and at the end of each unit administered by the classroom teacher using the assessments provided by research-based programs. Some progress monitoring will be completed weekly at the end of each story. Students in Tier II will be progress monitored every two weeks and Tier III will be progress monitored every week. One round of Tier II instruction will occur five days per week for six weeks. A professional data-driven decision will be made about the students' instructional needs being met or completed after the first round of intervention and appropriate measures taken according to data results.

Data-based decision making procedures for Tier I:

Students that benchmark will continue to receive Tier 1 instruction within the regular classroom reading block. Students that score below the benchmark will continue with Tier I instruction, but will also receive an additional 30 minutes of instruction in Tier II. The RTI school team will evaluate progress monitoring data to determine if progress is being made.

Describe procedures to monitor fidelity of implementation for Tier II:

A fidelity checklist will be used to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core program and to ensure differentiated instruction is being used to meet student needs. Fidelity check rubric and walk-thru observations will be utilized as a means to ensure the fidelity of implementation. The principal and/or curriculum coach, will conduct fidelity checks and walk-thru observations on a monthly basis. Observations will note if teachers are spending adequate time on the strategies used during the reading block. Teachers will use the intervention form to document the date and amount of time spent in intervention. Teachers are required to complete a RTI intervention documentation log. The date and length of time of the interventions must be documented. The principal reviews this log periodically. It is also a requirement for all RTI special education referrals and is reviewed by the school psychologist to determine that the intervention was completed with fidelity.

Tier II

Describe Tier II interventions to be used for each academic area being implemented:

Tier II students will receive more focused reading instruction than the typical classroom reading instruction provides. The Tier II reading intervention will address the needs of students who are not progressing adequately in the core 90 minute reading block. The designated intervention for Tier II is an additional 30 minutes. The intervention will address the vocabulary and reading skills on a simpler level and focus on the 5 components of reading on a daily basis (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension).

Length of intervention session for reading:

Students will receive a regular 90 minute reading block of classroom instruction and an additional 30 minutes, which will comprise the components of Tier II. Students will receive instruction in the five components of reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Number of sessions per week and maximum number of students per group:

Tier II sessions in reading are scheduled to be 5 times per week. The group may be varied as needed since lessons are individualized.

Who provides interventions for reading:

Classroom teachers, reading interventionist, trained paraprofessionals, or designee will provide interventions.

Describe staff development and training for Tier II providers in reading:

- Professional development will be ongoing and provided regularly on researched-based methods and strategies in reading within the five components of reading. Strategies and methods include but are not limited to differentiated instruction, reading center activities, and reading across the curriculum.
- Curriculum coach will conduct grade level meetings in which teachers collaborate on instructional strategies that work and share information from conferences they have attended.

- Teachers will be provided initial training and updated yearly on the Reading/LA Curriculum Standards and the transition to Tennessee State Standards along with the instructional strategies needed to teach by the Curriculum Coach during team meetings.
- New teachers will receive training addressing topics including reading strategies, classroom management skills and training in the evaluation process and be assigned a mentor teacher.
- Training will also be provided on the Accelerated Reading (STAR) and other computer programs.

Progress-monitoring procedures for reading:

Student’s initial placement in Tier II will be for approximately 6 weeks. Tier II students will be progress monitored every two weeks using the basal reading assessments. Progress monitoring will be conducted by reading interventionist, classroom teachers, trained paraprofessionals, or designee. Test data will be used to determine which students are making progress or are in need of a second 6 weeks round of Tier II or placed in Tier III intervention. A professional data-driven decision will be made about the students’ instructional needs being met or complete after the first round of intervention and appropriate measures taken according to data results by the RTI team.

Data-based decision making procedures for Tier II:

A professional, data-driven decision will be made about the student’s instructional needs after the first round of intervention is complete by the school RTI Team based on progress monitoring data and regular classroom instruction. Goals will be set for the student based on data results by the school RTI team and classroom teacher as well as options for a placement decision will be made:

- Continuing with a second round of Tier II for 6 weeks based on a lack of progress.
- Exiting Tier II and being placed back in Tier I if the student is able to show significant improvement or meet the benchmark after the round of intervention.
- Returning to Tier 2 if a future assessment indicates the need.
- Entering Tier 3 for intensive intervention.

Describe procedures to be used to monitor the fidelity of implementation for Tier II intervention:

A fidelity check list will be used to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core program and to ensure differentiated instruction is being used to meet student needs. A fidelity check rubric and walk-thru observations will be utilized as a means to ensure the fidelity of implementation. The principal and/or curriculum coach, will conduct fidelity checks and walk-thru observations on a monthly basis. Observations will note if teachers are spending adequate time on the strategies used in the 90 minute reading block and additional 30 minute. Teachers will use the intervention form to document the date and amount of time spent in intervention. Teachers are required to complete a RTI intervention documentation log. The date and length of time of the interventions must be documented. The principal reviews this log periodically. It is also a requirement for

all RTI special education referrals and is reviewed by the school psychologist to determine that the intervention was completed with fidelity.

Tier III

At what is referral for consideration of special education services made:

Referral for special education is considered at the end of Tier III if the student has made little or no progress. Referral for special education is also considered by teacher, parent or doctor request for medical diagnosis and/or the receiving of records from previous schools for transfer students.

Describe the Tier III intervention program for reading:

Tier III intervention is for students who have attended one or two rounds of Tier 2 instruction and have not made adequate progress on benchmark assessments. This intervention contains carefully designed and implemented instruction and materials emphasizing the five essential components of reading. The program will provide multiple examples and feedback that are individualized for each student. The interventionist will deliver the program in a direct, explicit and systematic manner adhering to the fidelity of the program. Students will be placed in small group setting according to grade level.

Essential Tier III strategies include but are not limited to:

- Provide additional opportunities for correction and feedback.
- Provide additional time to complete activities/assessments.
- Provide additional allowable accommodations per individual student need.
- Provide opportunities for repetition, practice and review.
- Scaffolding by using then fading, prompts and cues.

Length of intervention session and maximum number of students per group in reading: The length of the Tier III intervention will be a regular 90 minute reading block of classroom instruction; with an additional 60 minutes with an interventionist for a 6 weeks period. These 60 minutes of daily intervention will provide a double dose of intensive, systematic, and explicit instruction using research based and criterion-referenced materials. There will be no more than 5 students per group in Tier III.

Number of sessions per week:

Tier III will provide 4 – 5 sessions per week with a reading interventionist.

Who provides intervention for reading? Designate type of personnel by funding source:

Interventionists are funded through both local/state funds and federal funds. Reading interventionist, trained paraprofessionals, and classroom teachers will provide interventions.

How are Tier III providers trained and describe staff development at Tier III:

- Professional development will be ongoing and provided regularly on researched-based methods and strategies in reading within the five components of reading.

Strategies and methods include but are not limited to differentiated instruction, reading center activities, and reading across the curriculum.

- Reading interventionist and paraprofessionals visited various classrooms in adjoining counties to see other RTI programs in action.
- Curriculum coach will conduct grade level meetings in which teachers collaborate on instructional strategies that work and share information from conferences they have attended.
- Teachers will be provided initial training and updated yearly on the Reading/LA Curriculum Standards and the transition to Tennessee State Standards along with the instructional strategies needed to teach by the Curriculum Coach during team meetings.
- Textbook representatives will conduct training on the proper use of the adopted reading program.
- New teachers will receive training addressing topics including reading strategies, classroom management skills and training in the evaluation process and be assigned a mentor teacher.

Progress-monitoring procedures:

Students will stay in Tier III for approximately 6 weeks. All Tier III students will be progress monitored on a weekly basis to gather data to check for student progress using reading program assessments, basal reader assessment kit including but not limited to fluency, comprehension, cold reads and vocabulary tests. The classroom teacher, reading interventionist, and paraprofessionals will conduct monitoring.

Data-based decision making procedures:

Students will remain in Tier III for approximately 6 weeks. A professional, data-driven decision will be made about the student's instructional needs after the first round of intervention is complete by the school RTI Team based on progress monitoring data and regular classroom instruction. Goals will be set for the student based on data results by the school RTI team and classroom teacher as well as options for a placement decision will be made:

- Exiting Tier III and being placed back in Tier II for 6 weeks based on progress made.
- Continuing with a second round of Tier III for an additional 3 weeks based on a lack of progress.
- If after no less than a total 9 weeks of small group, direct instruction, a student is not making adequate progress, the School RTI Team will discuss the impact and effect of the Tier III intervention and may consider the need for a screening for special education services.

How are parents involved and kept informed at this level:

Schools hold orientations and "Back to School Night," at the beginning of each school year. RTI is one of the topics discussed with parents. Parents will be notified at the beginning of the school year that all students will be given a reading assessment three times during the school year. This notification will be sent to parents in a parent

newsletter sent home every six weeks and in a district wide newsletter sent home quarterly. Parents will be contacted after each universal screening with results, and before initiating and discontinuing each level of intervention. Progress monitoring reports will be sent home every two weeks to parents of Tier II students and every week to parents of students in Tier III requiring parent signature on a progress log for the appropriate TIER. Parents will be notified and an intervention team meeting scheduled to review the data and determine the best educational plan for students that have not made adequate progress. When referral for special education is being considered, the parents will be contacted and included in RTI school support team decisions.

Throughout the school year, parental communication is constant and parents have opportunities to be involved in their child's education. During parent/teacher conferences, one held each semester; teachers discuss reading strengths and challenges with the parent and answer any questions about the RTI process. Mid-six/nine week reports go home to parents and folders go home daily or weekly. Some classes use a daily planner for parents to sign off on. Parents may request a meeting at any time to discuss their child's progress in RTI.

Describe procedures to be used to monitor the fidelity of implementation for Tier III intervention:

A fidelity check rubric and walk-thru observations will be utilized as a means to ensure the fidelity of implementation. The principal and/or curriculum coach, will conduct fidelity checks and walk-thru observations on a monthly basis. Teachers will use the intervention form to document the date and amount of time spent in intervention. Intervention teachers are required to complete a RTI intervention documentation log. The date and length of time of the interventions must be documented. The principal reviews this log periodically. It is also a requirement for all RTI special education referrals and is reviewed by the school psychologist to determine that the intervention was completed with fidelity.

Special Education Procedures

When will a student be referred for a special education evaluation:

Special education evaluation will be requested by the School RTI Team when a student has completed Tier I, Tier II and is in Tier III; making little or no progress. Referral for special education is also considered by teacher, parent or doctor request for medical diagnosis and/or the receiving of records from previous schools for transfer students. When referral for special education is being considered, the parents will be contacted and included in RTI school support team decisions.

Who makes the decision for a referral for special education evaluation and how do school support teams interface with grade level teams:

Each school will have selected representatives on their RTI School Team. The RTI School Team will pass referrals to the Special Education Screening Team (S Team). The S-Team will review the RTI documentation and will send home the S-Team consent form for parents to sign in order to start the S Team process for special education.

What are the general procedures to be used for special education evaluation:

General procedures used for the special education evaluation will be those guidelines required by the State Department of Education.

What are the components of a special education evaluation:

Components include IQ testing, achievement testing, speech/language testing, documentation from classroom teacher and RTI interventionist, observation from the special education teacher, and information from the parent regarding the development, background, and medical information about the child. All eligibility criteria must be met in order for a student to be eligible for services. If it is determined that a student is eligible for services, then an IEP team will develop an Individualized Education Plan for the student. Our special education department follows the guidelines required by the State Department of Education.

Describe progress-monitoring procedures after the student begins receiving special education services:

Special education students will be progress monitored weekly by the special education teacher, paraprofessional or designee from the special education department. This data will be communicated to the parent during the IEP team meetings or through progress reports that are sent home to the parent. If the student is not making adequate progress falling below the grade level criteria for both performance level and rate of growth, the student should continue receiving special education services. An IEP team meeting must be held to change or discontinue intervention services and can be requested by the parent at anytime according to guidelines by the State Department of Education.

A data-based decision making procedure after the student begins receiving special education services:

After each six weeks there will be a meeting between the regular and special education teacher to determine if the student is making progress or if a change needs to be considered. Data will be used to determine whether the student is making adequate progress toward the goals in the IEP and whether to continue or modify the instruction, or to consider a change in placement.

Describe procedures for monitoring fidelity of implementation of special education services

The principal, special education supervisor and/or curriculum coaches will conduct fidelity checks and walk-thru observations on a monthly basis. The principal and special education supervisor will adhere to all policies for special education from the State Department of Education.

Program Evaluation

Describe overall program evaluation activity:

System-wide data and school-level data by grade and teacher (STAR, TCAP Achievement and TVAAS) will be reviewed annually and benchmark formative assessment data reviewed four times per year to determine the effectiveness of the RTI

Program. Results will be used to make program improvements and adjustments. With teacher instruction in Tier I, the 90 minute reading block and interventions in Tiers II and III, student proficiency should improve with fewer students being referred for special education services.

Hancock County Schools District RTI Leadership Team

The District RTI Leadership Team includes a designated facilitator and should include district and school level administrators. This team works to organize professional development, set and monitor timelines for implementation, and guide the implementation of RTI. The team should meet at regular intervals to adequately support the RTI process. School level personnel may be invited to district meetings at the discretion of the team.

Team Member Responsibilities

Director of Schools

- Monitor and support the implementation of the RTI process
- Set and monitor timelines for implementation
- Support professional development
- Support and monitor the fidelity of the RTI² framework

District Administrators

- Assist in identifying, evaluating, selecting, and adopting materials and resources to establish and maintain procedures for high quality instruction and intervention
- Identify and adopt high quality assessment procedures
- Guidelines for assessing, planning, and delivering appropriate professional development.
- Fidelity monitoring

School Administrators

- Assist in identifying, evaluating, selecting, and adopting materials and resources to establish and maintain procedures for high quality instruction and intervention
- Develop assessment protocols and fidelity monitoring;
- Determine guidelines for assessing, planning, and delivering appropriate professional development
- Organize and Chair School Level Teams
- Fidelity Monitoring
- *Provide School Level data for District RTI Meetings*

Additionally, each team must have a designated Facilitator and Recorder/Time Keeper

Facilitator

- Establish Calendar for District RTI Meetings
- Provide District RTI Meeting Agendas

Recorder/Time Keeper

- Keep a record of all district meetings, including topics discussed and outcome
- Keep team members on topic and within allotted time.

District RTI Team Roles

<i>Member</i>	<i>Role/Responsibility</i>
Tony Seal	Director of Schools
Charlotte Mullins	District Administrator
Angela Kinsler	School Administrator
Brian Greene	School Administrator
Mike Belcher	District Administrator
Jennifer Yount	District Administrator
Deborah Southern	District Administrator