

Arkansas' RtI/Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative:

Scaling Up the State Improvement Grant's SPRINT Process for Systemic Implementation and Success

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Structuring Schools for Success:
Establishing Building-Wide Positive Behavioral Support Systems
and Prevention/Intervention Teams to Meet the Needs of All Students
The DVD Series Guidebook

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Primary Presentation Focus Questions

- ◆ What are the functional characteristics of effective instruction and classroom management for all students that should anchor all RtI approaches?

Primary Presentation Focus Questions

- ◆ Why is it important for all staff in a school to learn and use a common functional assessment/problem-solving process?

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- ◆ From a student perspective, why is it essential to integrate both academic and behavioral services and outcomes into a school's RtI system?

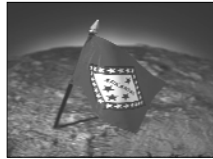
Primary Presentation Focus Questions

- ♦ What are the advantages of an RtI system that uses a problem-solving process that focuses on (a) the intensity of interventions needed, not diagnostic labels; (b) individualized, functional assessment, not universal assessment batteries; and (c) student-focused, contextual decision-making, not rigid, psychometric decision rules?

First Things First. . .

Arkansas' DOE ***Closing the Achievement Gap*** (CTAG) Initiative

- * RtI not specified,
- * Effective instructional services are emphasized



Arkansas' ***Closing the Achievement Gap*** (CTAG) Initiative

Foundations: A school effectiveness or school improvement process that uses an effective whole-school design process to:

- Maximize Students' Academic Achievement
- Create Safe School Environments and Positive School Climates
- Build Effective Teaching and Problem Solving Teams that Speed Successful Interventions to Challenging Students
- Increase and Sustain Effective Classroom Instruction and Management
- Increase and Sustain Strong Parent and Community Involvement
- Develop and Implement Effective Strategic Plans
- Organize Building Committees and Student Learning Clusters
- Develop Effective Data Management Systems for Outcome Evaluations

At the Core of Arkansas' **Closing the Achievement Gap** (CTAG) Initiative

SPRINT: School
 Prevention,
 Review, and
 INtervention
 Ieam

The **SPRINT** Process consists of. . .



- Data-based, Functional Assessment, Problem-Solving, and Early Intervention
- The scaffolding of Grade-level and Building-level Teams to utilize problem-solving and deliver early intervention services as needed
- Ongoing progress monitoring (formative and summative evaluation) at the student, staff, and system levels
- Professional development, effective resource utilization, and systematic articulation

What is the **SPRINT's** Primary Service Delivery Model ???

Problem-Solving – Consultation – Intervention

NOT

Wait to Fail – Refer – Test – Place



What are the Goals of the SPRINT Process?

To address the needs of students experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties by:

- Using a systematic problem-solving process that links functional assessment to evidence-based or research-based interventions.
- Consulting with classroom teachers so that the identified interventions are implemented with integrity and success.
- To establish assessment and intervention baselines in case more intensive interventions are needed later.
- To increase the knowledge and skills of all of the teachers and other professionals involved.

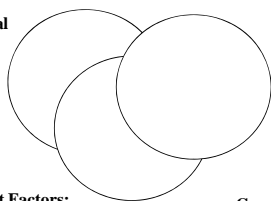
Fundamental SPRINT Principles...

- All SPRINT referrals are referrals for problem solving.
- Students are not referred. . . Instructional environments are referred.
- The focus is on early, strategic, intensive, successful intervention, not "waiting to fail."
- Coordinated, integrated, and intensive resources are needed early on to maximize success.

Components of the Instructional Environment

Teacher-Instructional Factors:

Are teachers well-matched to their students and curricula?



Student Factors:
Are students prepared and "programmed" for success?

Curricular Factors:
Are curricula well-matched to students and teachers?

More Fundamental Principles. . .

- ◆ All interventions must be outcome-based.
- ◆ Interventions must be formatively evaluated to monitor progress over time.
- ◆ The ultimate goals of intervention:
 - Help students to master their academic skills and succeed in general education environment.
 - Help students to learn and master interpersonal and self-management skills.

Academic and Behavioral Interventions

Scientifically-based. . . .

Evidence-based. . . .

Research-based. . . .

Selecting and Implementing Effective Interventions

- ◆ Interventions should:
 - Be acceptable & realistic
 - Produce meaningful results
 - Be taught to teachers & students before implementation
 - Be implemented with integrity
 - Be useful for other students

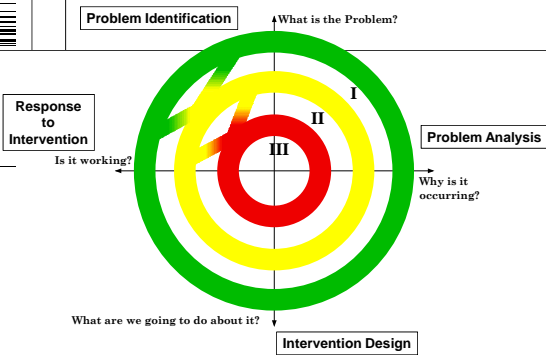
Consultation is a Key !!!

Intervention Plans should be Written *Prior to Implementation*

Intervention Plan Components/Sections:

- ◆ Academic/Behavioral Goals/Targets
- ◆ Evidence-based Interventions/Methods to be used
- ◆ People needed (for Consultation/Direct Services)
- ◆ Other Resources needed
- ◆ Sequence of Activities to Implement Intervention
- ◆ Timelines: Start/Finish
- ◆ Assessment/Evaluation Tools– Formative/Summative
- ◆ Data-based Indicators of a Successful Intervention
 - Short-term outcomes
 - Long-term outcomes

Problem Solving and Response-to-Intervention

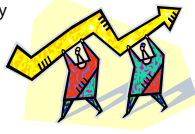


Primary Presentation Focus Questions

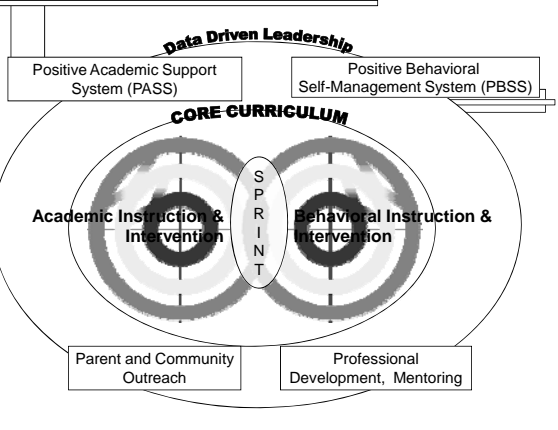
- ◆ What are the functional characteristics of effective instruction and classroom management for all students that should anchor all RtI approaches?

Where Does Response-to-Intervention (RtI) Start?

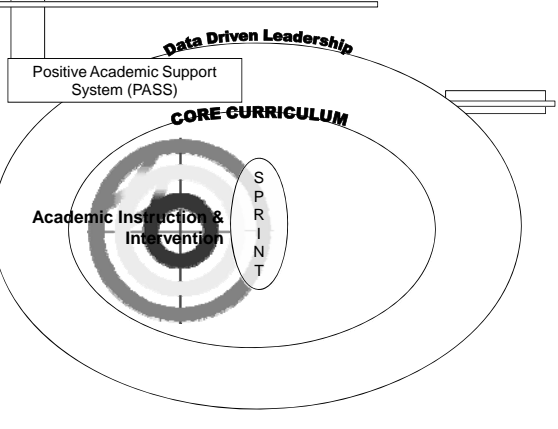
- RtI starts in the general education classroom with evidence-based curricula taught by Highly Qualified Teachers using effective instructional and classroom management practices
- RtI involves determining students' mastery of material and response to classroom management through effective assessments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

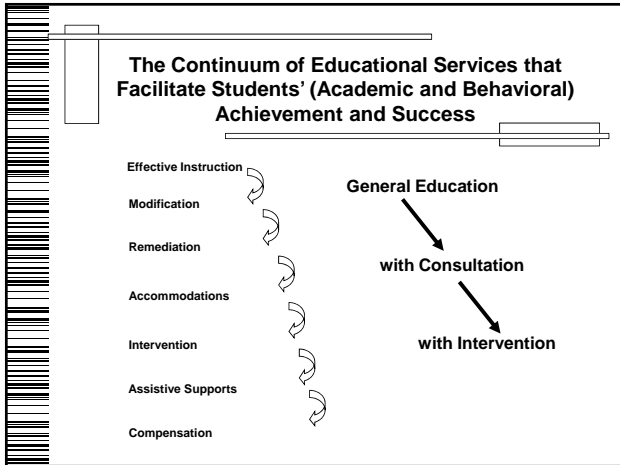


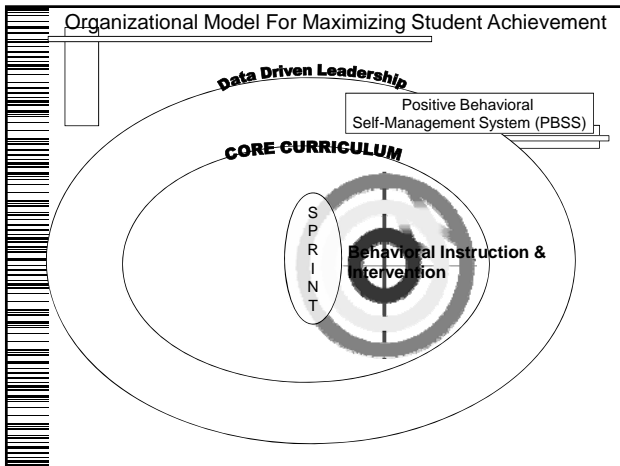
Organizational Model For Maximizing Student Achievement

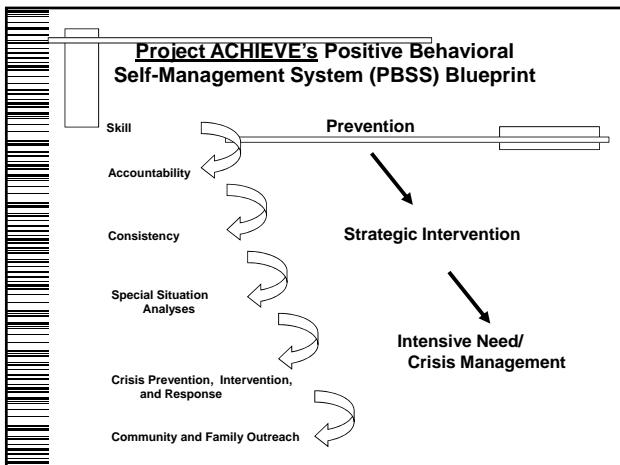


Organizational Model For Maximizing Student Achievement









Where does Response-to-Intervention (RtI) Go?

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

Primary Presentation Focus Questions

- Why is it important for all staff in a school to learn and use a common functional assessment/problem-solving process?

An Overview of the Problem Solving Process

- Step 1: Review all existing Data and History on the Student
- Step 2: Complete a "Gap Analysis," Functionally Describe the "Problem," and Identify Replacement Behaviors
- Step 3: Generate Hypotheses (using functional assessment) to explain why problem is occurring
- Step 4: Assess (confirm or reject) Hypotheses

An Overview of the Problem Solving Process

- ◆ **Step 5:** Design and Write the Intervention Plan
- ◆ **Step 6:** Implement the Intervention Plan and Interventions
- ◆ **Step 7:** Formatively and Summatively Evaluate the Interventions and Intervention Plan

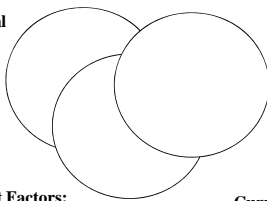
What Determines the Success of an Rtl Process ???

- Accurate Identification of the "Problem" and the Gap between this and a desired Outcome
- Successful Differentiation between the "Problem" and a "Symptom"
- Accurate Functional Analysis of the Gap (i.e., WHY the gap exists)
- Successful Selection of the Research-based Intervention that links to the Functional Analysis
- Appropriate Training, Preparation, Implementation, and Evaluation of the Intervention

Most of this Early Assessment and Early Intervention occurs within the Student's Instructional Environment

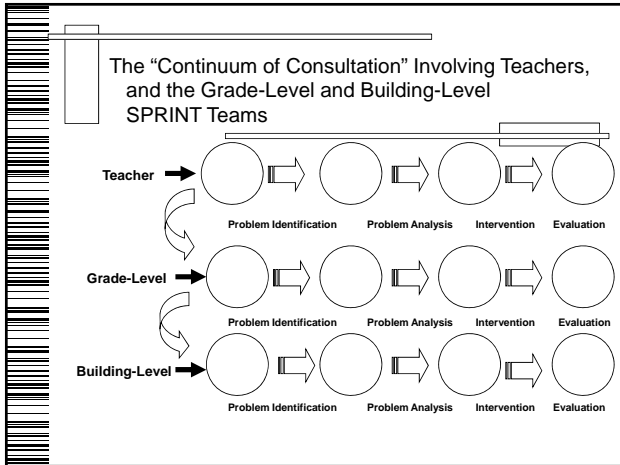
Teacher-Instructional Factors:

Are teachers well-matched to their students and curricula?



Student Factors:
Are students prepared and "programmed" for success?

Curricular Factors:
Are curricula well-matched to students and teachers?



We STRONGLY Recommend:

Grade-level SPRINT Teams. . . .
 That meet at least monthly

A "Permanent Member" Building-level SPRINT Team. . . .
 That meets weekly

- Composition of the Grade-Level SPRINT Team**
- ◆ Every General Education Teacher at the specific grade level
 - ◆ Support specialists assigned to the grade
 - ◆ One member of the Building-level SPRINT Team
 - ◆ Other Support specialists or consultants as needed (to help, on a case-by-case basis with specific student concerns)

Composition of the Building-Level SPRINT Team

- ♦ The “referring” General Education Teacher
- ♦ Administrator or Administrative-designee
- ♦ School-based Related Service professionals
- ♦ School-based Instructional Specialists/ consultants
- ♦ Other staff skilled in academic or behavioral interventions
- ♦ Other school-based specialists (e.g., nurse, computer-assisted learning specialist, school-based mental health specialist)

Primary Presentation Focus Questions

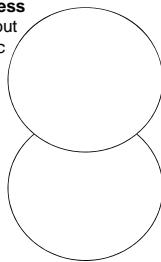
- ♦ From a student perspective, why is it essential to integrate both academic and behavioral services and outcomes into a school's RtI system?

The Interdependency between Academics and Behavior

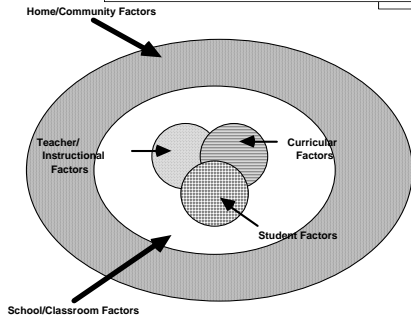
Academic Success
Do students act out due to academic frustration?

Behavioral Success
Do students have less academic success when they do not have certain behavioral skills?

Functional Assessment and Data-Based Problem Solving
Helps us to tell the difference.



The Interdependent Components of Student Learning, Behavior, and Achievement



Causal vs. Correlational “Whys”

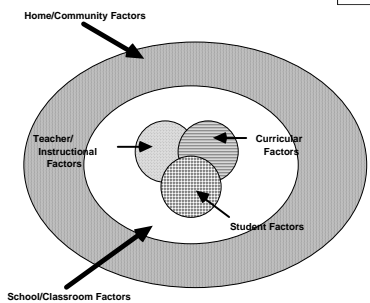
The Causal “Whys”:

- Student
- Teacher/Instruction
- Curriculum

The Correlational “Whys”:

- Classroom/Peers
- School/District
- Home/Community

Functional Assessment: The Two “Whys”: Causal Whys versus Correlational Whys



Functional Assessment Leads to Strategic Intervention

- ♦ **Step 3:** Generate Hypotheses (using functional assessment) to explain why problem is occurring
- ♦ **Step 4:** Assess (confirm or reject) Hypotheses
- ♦ **Step 5:** Design and Write the Intervention Plan
- ♦ **Step 6:** Implement the Intervention Plan and Interventions

Who are Your "Non-Responsive" Students?

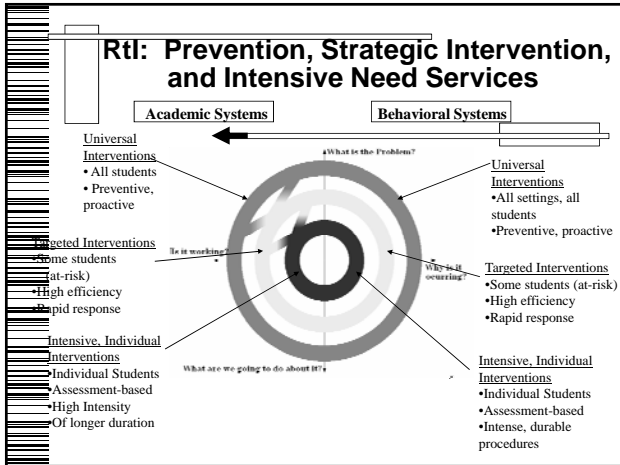
Academically:

- ♦ Have not yet learned and mastered needed skills (Student, Instruction, Curriculum)
- ♦ Are not able to learn and master skills as quickly as others (Other Students, Teacher, Curriculum)
- ♦ Have a limitation that needs to be circumvented, "neutralized," or accommodated such that learning and mastery occurs
- ♦ Motivation (Student, Teacher, Curriculum)
- ♦ Consistency (Student, Teacher, Curriculum)

Who are Your "Non-Responsive" Students?

Behaviorally:

- ♦ Have not yet learned and mastered needed skills (Student, Instruction, Curriculum)
- ♦ Are not able to learn and master skills as quickly as others (Other Students, Teacher, Curriculum)
- ♦ Have an "undesirable" skill/behavior that interferes with desirable skills or learning and mastery
- ♦ Have a limitation that needs to be circumvented, "neutralized," or accommodated such that learning and mastery occurs
- ♦ Motivation (Student, Teacher, Curriculum)
- ♦ Consistency (Student, Teacher, Curriculum)



Primary Presentation Focus Questions

- ♦ What are the advantages of an Rtl system that uses a problem-solving process that focuses on (a) the intensity of interventions needed, not diagnostic labels; (b) individualized, functional assessment, not universal assessment batteries; and (c) student-focused, contextual decision-making, not rigid, psychometric decision rules?

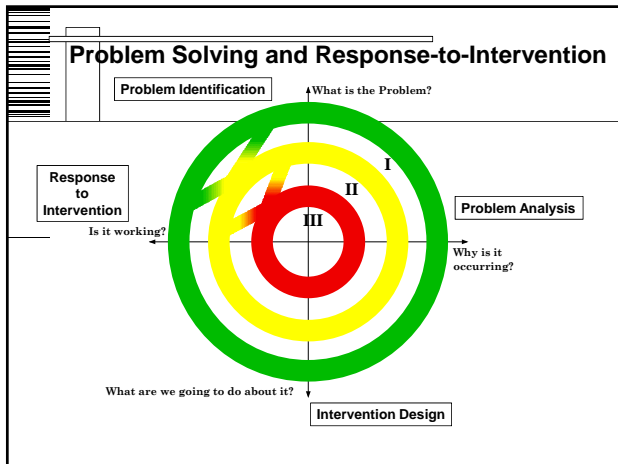
Intervention Intensity is Essential

- ♦ Once high-probability-of-success interventions are identified (based on the data-based functional assessment), these interventions should be implemented with the intensity needed to be successful. Intensity, here, could involve, for example, (a) the amount of time devoted to implementing or practicing the intervention; (b) the number of consultants or experts needed to support the intervention; (c) the amount or type of reinforcement (positive or negative) used to respond to student and/or staff behavior; or (d) the frequency and type of formative and/or summative evaluation needed to determine the impact of the intervention.

Intervention Intensity is Essential

- ♦ The point here is that when the “right” intervention is not implemented with the “correct” degree of intensity, it is likely to fail. Moreover, the “failure” may additionally foster a resistance to future intervention—for both the staff and student-in-need; it may reinforce or strengthen inappropriate student behavior; and/or it may eliminate the option to use this “right” intervention in the future.

Problem Solving and Response-to-Intervention



LD? Deal or No Deal ???

- ♦ Mary is in Grade 4 functioning consistently— across the primary areas of literacy— at the beginning of third grade level.
- ♦ In September in Grade 2, she had a medical condition that kept her out of school for 3 months. When she returned, her class had a long-term substitute for the rest of the school year due to her teacher’s difficult pregnancy and the birth of her child.
- ♦ Mary started Grade 2 on grade level in reading, and ended Grade 2 approximately 8 months behind in literacy skills. During Grade 3, she was taught at her grade—not functional skill—level.

♦ LD ????? Deal or No Deal ??????

Now ED? Deal or No Deal ???

Mary --Grade 4 Literacy Skills- Beginning of 3rd Grade level

- In September in Grade 4, Mary's was put into a Tier 2 supplemental 15-week reading program at her instructional level (that all Tier 2 students received), while she continued to be taught at the fourth grade level in her homeroom classroom.
- Because of the lack of coordination across the instruction, her failure experiences at the fourth grade level continued, and her "inability" to recognize that the supplemental instruction was attempting to "catch her up" resulted in Mary becoming depressed, non-responsive, and instructionally immobilized.

ED? Deal or No Deal ???

Mary --Grade 4 Literacy Skills- Beginning of 3rd Grade level

- By January, Mary had made no progress in literacy, and her depression and learned helplessness had become the primary concern.
 - ◆ Now. . . ED ????
 - ◆ Deal or No Deal ?????
- ◆ WHAT INTERVENTION WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL FOR MARY???

The Best Universal Screening Approach

- A Competent General Education Teacher at every grade level
- An explicit, evidence-based Scope and Sequence in every academic area with criteria for skill mastery for every benchmark, objective, and skill
- Reliable and valid Authentic or Curriculum-based Assessment protocols used by trained teachers for progress monitoring
- Effective progress tracking, analysis, and comparisons to explicit academic goals for mastery and transfer

Intervention: "Universal" versus "Strategic"

- It is critical to note that we do not advocate a lock-step approach to intervention where, for example, a student experiencing academic difficulties automatically goes into a specific curricular intervention program implemented for a fixed number of minutes per day and weeks per program before an evaluation determines its success (or the student's response).
- Indeed, as emphasized in the Data-based Functional Assessment Problem Solving process, the reasons why a student is not responding to effective instruction in the regular classroom curriculum must be analyzed and identified so that the interventions needed are functionally and strategically targeted to these reasons.

Intervention: "Universal" versus "Strategic"

- This student-centered approach minimizes the potential that a student is put, for example, into a 15-week Tier 2 "remedial program" that has nothing to do with the reasons why the student is not learning and mastering essential skills and material.
- Certainly, a medical doctor would not prescribe a 15-week program of diet and exercise if that program had nothing to do with the patient's etiology. This would only result in a "loss" of 15 weeks where the patient should have, with proper diagnosis, received the correct medical treatment.
- Similarly, a 15-week remedial program that does not directly address the student's instructional and learning needs results both in a loss of crucial intervention time and in the potential that, for example, the additional 15-week "failure" experience makes the student most resistant to the next (even correct) intervention and more convinced that s/he will "never learn this material anyways."

When Students Don't Succeed:

- ✓ Service delivery must use a "Problem-solving, Consultation, Intervention" mode of operation.
- ✓ Interventions must focus on changing behaviors, not treating diagnostic labels, categories, or conditions.
- ✓ Intervention follows a "Response-to-Intervention" prevention-focused model.
- ✓ Interventions are delivered in the Setting of Origin, or— if strategically needed—in the LRE using the Most Preventative Intervention.

Can We Meet The Challenge?

Yes. . . If we focus on:

- ☐ Effective academic and behavioral instruction for all students, and Effective early intervention services and interventions, based on functional assessment, for students who need them
- ☐ Avoid the "Tier as a Label" mindset
- ☐ Avoid the "Rtl failure → Special Education referral" mindset
- ☐ Educate ALL students, focusing on THEIR success, IN the general education classroom and curriculum, WITH the intensity of services and interventions needed to facilitate their success.

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