

Response to Instruction and Intervention
for Behavior (RTI²-B) Framework

TN

Department of
Education

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U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSEP), Memo 11-07

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Forward from Commissioner McQueen

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Intent of the Framework

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) is a multi-tiered, problem-solving framework used to meet the needs of each individual student. Beginning July 2014, Tennessee schools have been using the RTI2 Framework to design academic interventions and systems of support within their schools. During this implementation, it became clear that for many students, behavior is the underlying area of need impacting academic success. The purpose of the Response to Instruction and Intervention for Behavior (RTI2-B) Framework is to help districts, schools, staff, parents, and students align clear expectations with behavioral interventions in one cohesive multi-tiered system of supports that is sustainable for schools and districts to implement.

With consistent and continued implementation of RTI2-B, schools can expect:

- a decrease in interruptions to learning;
- a decrease in chronic absenteeism;
- a decrease in the number of office discipline referrals;
- a decrease in suspensions;
- an increase in positive interactions;
- a positive school climate;
- a proactive approach to crisis;
- an increase in instructional time;
- an increase in leadership opportunities for staff, parents, and students; and
- an increase in student academic achievement.

Ultimately, when implemented with fidelity, RTI2-B will provide more time for teachers to teach, students to learn, and administrators to run their schools efficiently and effectively.

Introduction

The Tennessee Department of Education's strategic plan, Tennessee Succeeds, states, "Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark upon their chosen path in life." Rigorous standards, aligned assessment, strong accountability, and a focus on five priority areas—Early Foundations and Literacy, High School and Bridge to Postsecondary, All Means All, Educator Support, and District Empowerment—are essential to meeting the important goals outlined in Tennessee Succeeds. Additionally, each school and classroom must provide students with opportunities to grow academically, socially, physically, and culturally in a non-threatening and supportive environment that recognizes individual differences and better enables them to become viable and productive citizens.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is defined as "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2005). Based on a problem-solving model, the RTI approach considers environmental factors as they might apply to an individual student (i.e. school behavioral expectations, academic expectations, attendance, and parent/family involvement) and provides intervention as soon as the student demonstrates a need. Focused primarily on addressing academic problems, RTI has emerged as the new way to think about both disability identification and early intervention assistance for the "most vulnerable, academically unresponsive children"

in schools and school districts (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007, p. 131). Tennessee schools have put this research into action using a unique version of the RTI model that integrates the principles of quality instruction and intervention, called the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) Framework.

While RTI2 focuses on academic instruction and intervention, students also require behavior instruction and intervention to achieve success in academics. One particular multi-tiered behavior intervention model supported by research is called Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS aims to prevent inappropriate behavior by teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, 2007).

PBIS is a process that is consistent with the core principles of RTI. PBIS is anchored in the belief that all students require explicit instruction in behavioral expectations and, when needed, appropriate intervention. Interventions should be individualized and systematically provided to students, which includes addressing the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavioral problems.

RTI2-B supports universal prevention efforts within Tier I to promote a positive class- and school-wide climate. When using positive behavior supports in all three tiers (i.e., focusing on teaching students the behaviors we want to see, as opposed to punishing the behaviors we don't want to see, while developing relationships between students and school staff), schools create a culture where all students and teachers are respected and included in their community. This focus on school climate includes Tier I strategies for attendance; reducing chronic absenteeism is a critical benefit of effective RTI2-B implementation.

In addition to focusing on behavior interventions for students who require additional support, Tennessee's new RTI2-B Framework borrows from and supports a combination of evidence-based and problem-solving practices, including: RTI, PBIS, social emotional learning, strategies to address mental health, comprehensive school counseling programs, attendance monitoring, and classroom management techniques. For many schools, these strategies are not new. The overarching vision described in the RTI2-B Framework can help schools determine if they are currently meeting the needs of all students and implementing current initiatives with fidelity. They may subsequently identify future needs for training, clarification, and/or support.

Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP)

The RTI2-B Framework will help to guide districts and schools in developing and implementing a problem-solving approach that addresses the whole child—academics and behavior. In addition to this framework, three universities will provide training and support to schools and districts through the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP). The TBSP offices are located at the Lambuth Campus of University of Memphis, Vanderbilt University, and University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Guiding Principles

Strong, unified leadership is critical to successful implementation. The following graphic identifies the essential components of the complete RTI2-B Framework and is based on the document Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Implementation Blueprint (2015). The graphic, as well as the descriptors that follow, serve as a guide for teams at the school, district, and state levels. At the center is the leadership team, which emphasizes the team-oriented approach to developing and maintaining the RTI2-B Framework in a school. In a highly effective school, the leadership team may be the same team that maintains the RTI2 Framework, therefore, we will refer to both teams as the “RTI2 leadership team”: a single, integrated team supporting both academics and behavior for all students.

Before implementation begins, the leadership team must address foundational systems, including: funding, visibility and dissemination, political support, policy and systems alignment, and personnel readiness.



Figure 1 From Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Implementation Blueprint, version 18, October 19, 2015

To ensure the fidelity of RTI2-B implementation, each of these foundational systems should be examined annually.

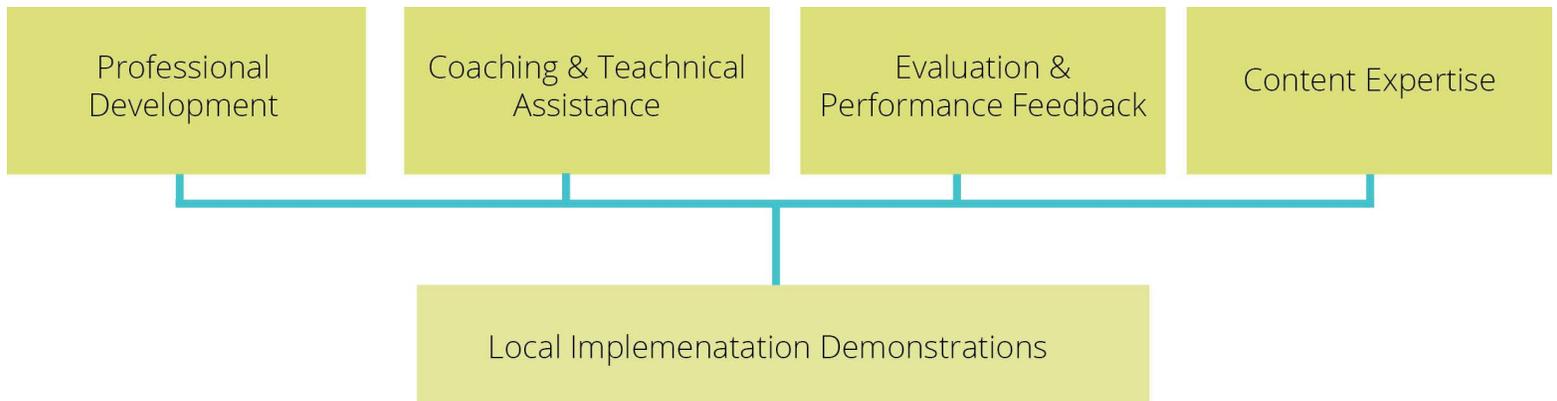
- **Funding:** The RTI2 leadership team develops a plan to ensure ongoing funding at the school and district level. This should include training materials, substitute teachers or stipends for additional duties, costs related to communication with families and stakeholders, and funding for initial implementation activities.

- **Visibility and Dissemination:** Understanding and being able to clearly articulate the RTI2-B goals is necessary for all stakeholders, including school staff, district administration, the school board, parent teacher organizations (PTO), and the community. The RTI2 leadership team develops and oversees all dissemination strategies (e.g., website, newsletter, meeting presentations, conferences, media, and annual progress reports). The leadership team also ensures that professional development activities and events are publicly posted and that policy, technical briefs, and procedural guides are developed, updated, and displayed on websites or shared sites, and distributed annually.

- **Political Support:** In order to secure the support of the district administration and key stakeholders, the RTI2-B Framework must be embedded into the structure of both the district and the schools. The RTI2 leadership team ensures that one of the district's primary goals is focused on building and sustaining positive social behaviors and school climate.

- **Policy and Systems Alignment:** The RTI2 leadership team must consider the district's and school's specific needs in order to develop a targeted, individualized plan. The RTI2 leadership team should critically evaluate school and district data, policies, initiatives, and systems for alignment with a common goal and the principles of RTI2-B. In an effort to align, a district may need to consider proactive changes, such as revising local school policies around discipline and behavior or adopting a district-wide discipline referral form. Schools should examine the roles and responsibilities of school staff, specifically school counselors and school psychologist to make sure that their responsibilities are aligned to the revised state board expectations. It is very difficult to determine need of students without considering multiple sources of data available from both the RTI2 and RTI2-B Framework. Essentially, the two RTI2 models are one in the same.

- **Personnel Readiness:** The district leadership will ensure that all personnel receives ongoing professional development and communications designed to support effective teacher and staff implementation of RTI2-B. The school counselor and school psychologist may be resources to support, develop, or coordinate the personnel training into action using a unique version of the RTI model that integrates the principles of quality instruction and intervention, called the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) Framework.



The four bottom boxes in *Figure 1* represent components that must be developed and maintained at all levels, particularly at the school level. These include professional development, coaching and technical assistance, evaluation and performance feedback, and content expertise. In addition, these same four components align with TEAM administrator rubric, which measures and support excellence within Tennessee schools.

- **Professional Development:** This refers to the ability to self-assess for specific programmatic and staff development needs and objectives, to develop a training action plan, to invest in increased local training capacity, and to implement evidence-based interventions and practices.

- **Coaching and Technical Assistance:** Research underscores the importance of coaching educators in order for intervention plans to be implemented with fidelity at the classroom level. Administrators at both the district and school levels must make sure that RTI2 leadership teams have the time, training, and resources to support teachers in classroom-level implementation. The RTI2 leadership team may appoint a lead coach; typically these individuals are serving multiple roles at one time (e.g. school counselor, school psychologist, lead teacher, or administrator).

- **Evaluation and Performance Feedback:** A core feature of RTI2-B implementation and sustainability is the collection and use of nonacademic data coupled with academic data to accurately determine the need of the student and the next steps to improve support based on individual student need. The use of data to make programming decisions will help improve explicit instruction, behavior supports, culture, and climate at the school level. The RTI2 leadership team must provide oversight by developing an evaluation process and schedule for assessing the fidelity of implementation and the impact of RTI2-B on student outcomes.

- **Content Expertise:** The RTI2 leadership team needs at least one team member with behavioral expertise to ensure the implementation integrity of RTI2-B practices at three levels: training, coaching, and evaluation.

- At the very bottom of *Figure 1* is **Local School/District Implementation Demonstrations.** When all parts of the RTI2-B Framework are completely functional and sustainable, a school may become a “model of demonstration” site for the district. In some cases, the district may become a “model of demonstration” district to mentor neighboring school districts.

Why is Sustainability Important?

Addressing the sustainability of RTI2-B in the early stages of planning and implementation will lead to lasting, positive effects for schools. If staff members have to learn new initiatives every year, they become frustrated and burn out quickly. Schools that carefully consider the sustainability of RTI2-B will increase the efficiency with which time and resources are used, as well as see continued improvement of their implementation efforts. Schools that have been implementing a multi-tiered, problem-solving system, like RTI2-B, for many years have found two significant predictors of sustainability: the level of commitment from stakeholders and the organization of implementation efforts. RTI2-B should be linked to the strategic plan of the district and give the framework purpose and meaning. For example, when attempting to increase graduation rate, attendance rates, and social emotional learning levels, RTI2-B can be the framework used to make this connection for educators. It is not a stand-alone or something extra, it is the way in which teachers and leaders can be trained on effective practices to change outcomes.



Component 1: General Procedures

1.1: Overview of RTI2-B

Since research has consistently supported various multi-tiered, problem-solving approaches, there are many different options from which to choose. It is easy for organizations to attempt to implement several different approaches at the same time. This can cause confusion, overlapping efforts, and burnout.

Determining the extent to which an initiative, curriculum, or policy best supports student success is the first step towards developing a multi-tiered, problem-solving approach. Some questions to consider in the initial phases of streamlining and integrating the work of schools include:

1. What initiatives, programs, and/or policies do we currently have in place for addressing the non-academic needs of students?
2. Do all of these programs support each other? Is there overlap? Is there conflict between programs?
3. How much instructional time are teachers spending on behavior, routines, social skills, and classroom management?
4. How much time are school administrators or non-classroom staff spending on behavior, routines, social skills, and discipline within Tier 1?
5. What data are collected by teachers, schools, and the district?
6. How are data being used to make decisions?
7. When are students' non-academic needs addressed and how?

Research shows a correlation between strong school-wide, or Tier I practices, and effective Tier II and Tier III interventions and supports. Schools with strong Tier I instruction are better able to identify students that require additional Tier II or Tier III interventions. When Tier I is not effective, schools may become overwhelmed with the large number of students who appear to need Tier II and Tier III interventions and support.

Early intervention is a key to success. When students are young, they can more easily be redirected, encouraged with small reinforcements (such as stickers), and, when needed, redirected to help support age-appropriate behavior. As students get older, addressing intensive academic and behavioral needs become more challenging. For example, it is simpler to redirect aggression toward a peer when a student is in kindergarten than when he or she is in high school. The intent of the framework is to move away from a reactionary model, and instead focus on a school-wide approach. This approach sets clear expectations for all and provides additional support for students that require more intensive support, based on their individual need. Effective interventions must be in place for students with behavioral deficits so students can make progress and schools are prepared to respond to situations before they escalate.

An additional consideration in developing RTI2-B is a student's transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. Expectations increase as the student ages, and each transition marks a milestone towards independence. Behaviors required for independence need to be explicitly taught to all students. These expectations should gradually increase over time, effectively preparing all students for independent living, college, and career success.

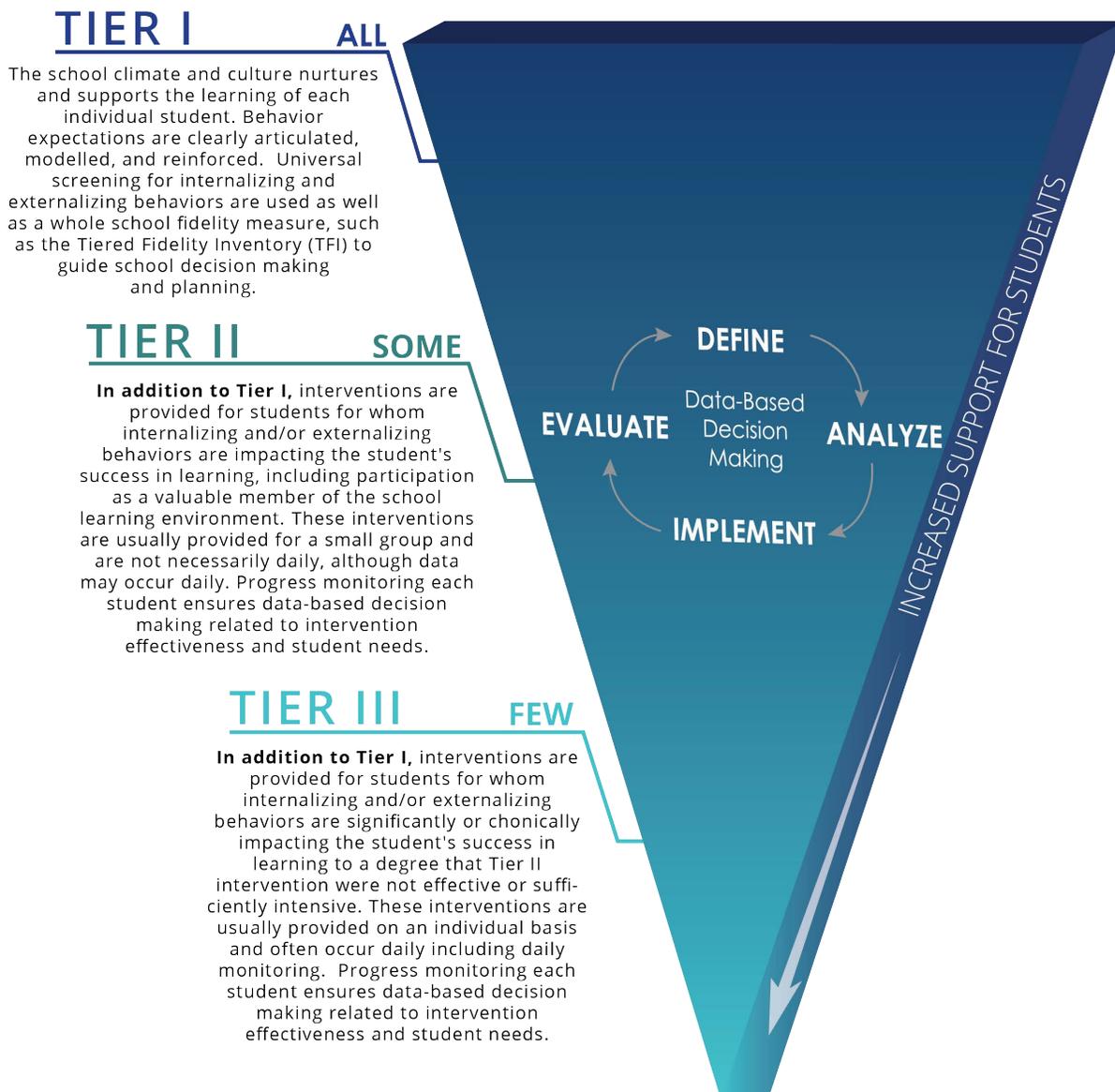
1.1.1 Relationship between RTI2-B and RTI2

The RTI2-B Framework is aligned with the RTI² Framework; together, these two frameworks complement each other— one academic and the other behavioral. Both RTI2 and RTI2-B are multi-tiered, problem-solving frameworks for providing high quality explicit instruction for all with increasingly intensive intervention based on student need. Academics and behavior are both components of the same support system and address the needs of the whole student. A student's behavior affects and is affected by their academics. Neither should be considered without the other.

RTI2 is a three-tiered problem-solving framework that includes:

- **Tier I:** High-quality, explicit core instruction for all students
- **Tier II:** Intervention provided for students below the 25th percentile in a specific skill, (approximately 10–15 percent of total student population)
- **Tier III:** More intensive, individualized intervention for students below the 10th percentile, (approximately 3–5 percent of the total student population)

Tennessee RTI²-B Model

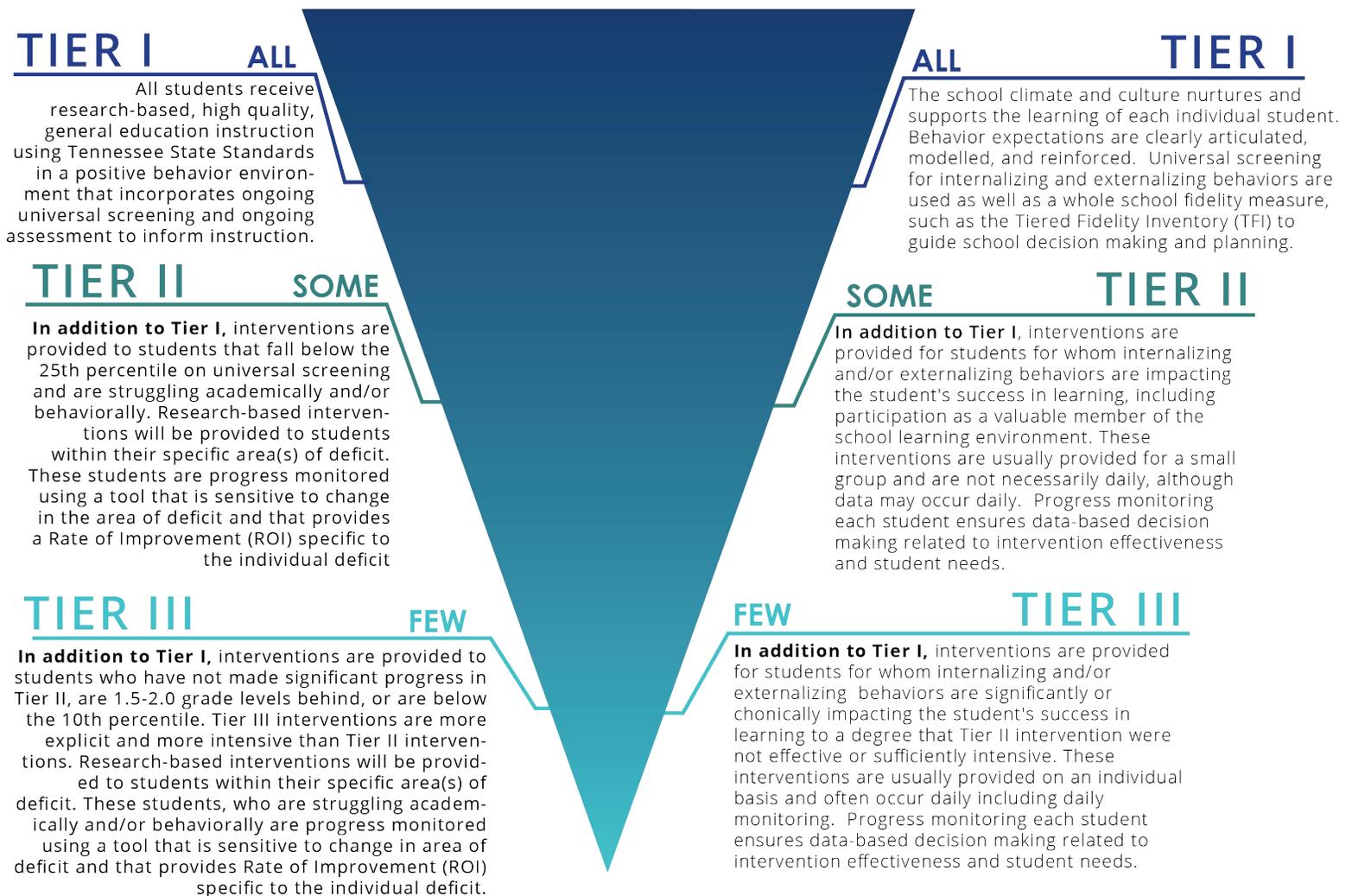


The distribution of students needing interventions through the RTI2-B Framework needs to follow a similar distribution as the distribution of students needing interventions through the RTI2 Framework. The great majority of the student population (85-90 percent) will have appropriate social, emotional, and behavior skills with high-quality and evidence-based foundations of social and behavioral support in place through Tier I. Some students (approximately 10-15 percent) will need more support for one or more skills, but with that support, will be able to learn the needed skills for long-term success. A few students (3-5 percent) will require more intensive intervention in social, emotional, or behavioral support. A small number of students will be eligible for special education intervention, services, and support in social, emotional, and/or behavioral skills.

Discipline concerns interrupt instruction and result in lost instructional opportunities. (Scott & Barrett, 2004). Additionally, poor academic performance may lead to students engaging in problematic behavior that results in escaping academic tasks (Filter & Horner, 2009; Lee, Sugai, & Horner, 1999; Preciado, Horner, & Baker, 2009). Academic and behavior deficits are intertwined and have been proven statistically significant in predicting outcomes of students once they leave the public education system.

The following chart summarizes the similarities and differences of RTI2 and RTI2-B.

RTI² vs. RTI²B



Goals of Multi-Tierd Problem Solving	Corresponding Framework
Proactive, preventative identification of learning challenges	RTI ²
Proactive, preventative identification of learning challenges	RTI ² -B
Proactive, preventative identification of learning challenges	RTI ²
Proactive, preventative identification of learning challenges	RTI ² -B
Proactive, preventative identification of learning challenges	RTI ² & RTI ² -B

1.1.2 How will schools benefit from RTI2-B?

Districts and schools work diligently to prepare students for college and career. RTI2-B provides the needed intervention and supports to students while also maximizing academic instructional time. Any time the teacher must stop teaching to address student behavior is time taken away from the allotted instructional time. Additionally, students who are able to collaboratively work together, problem-solve, and encourage one another are able to learn more at a deeper level through constructive conversations, group challenges and work, and consideration of multiple viewpoints. The whole student attends school, and it is the whole student who requires instruction. RTI2-B is the whole-child, problem-solving approach that will help districts and school unlock student achievement.

“Ultimately, RTI2-B will provide more time for teachers to *teach*, students to *learn*, and administrators to *run their schools efficiently and effectively*.”

With consistent and continued implementation of RTI2-B, schools can expect:

- a decrease in interruptions to learning;
- a decrease in chronic absenteeism;
- a decrease in the number of office discipline referrals;
- a decrease in suspensions;
- an increase in positive interactions;
- a more positive school climate;
- a proactive approach to crisis;
- an increase in instructional time;
- an increase in leadership opportunities for staff, parents, and students; and
- an increase in academic achievement.

The Tennessee Behavior Supports Projects will provide technical assistance (i.e., training, consultation, and/or external coaching) to school and district teams implementing RTI2-B.

Component 2: Leadership

Leadership is critical to the success of any initiative. RTI2-B requires leadership at the district and school level. School leadership includes teachers, support staff, parents, community, and most importantly, students. Leadership includes the responsibilities of planning, securing finances, facilitating public relations, conducting training, and managing sustainability. Each member of the RTI2 leadership team has an important role to play in the success of each student, staff member, and community stakeholder. Additionally, the leadership's commitment to RTI2-B beginning in development and continuing throughout implementation, including discussions related to fidelity, is essential to the sustainability of RTI2-B within schools.

2.1 Statewide Leadership Team

The statewide leadership team for RTI2-B is called the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP). It consists of the Tennessee Department of Education and three universities: University of Memphis-Lambuth, Vanderbilt University, and University of Tennessee-Knoxville. The state has allocated time and resources through a five-year training grant (2015-20) to better support schools and districts implementing RTI2-B. The statewide leadership team completes a self-assessment and action plan annually, at minimum, to monitor growth and progress of implementation efforts. In addition, the team holds monthly task force meetings to continue collaboration and encourage open communication.



The roles of the statewide leadership team are outlined below.

- 1. Funding:** The state budget allocated funds for the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP), supporting district and school implementation of the RTI2-B Framework.
- 2. Visibility:** An important aspect of the RTI2-B Framework is keeping the plan in front of all stakeholders at all times. Implementation of RTI2-B is encouraged and supported by the Tennessee Department of Education, as evidenced by a commitment to do the following:
 - a) Create and maintain a RTI2-B website that includes TBSP regional support contact information, district and school resources, and upcoming events
 - b) Provide communication to stakeholders regarding opportunities to learn and grow in implementation effectiveness. This may include tips for implementation, connections to Model of Demonstration schools or districts, and notices of upcoming professional development opportunities. Model of Demonstration schools will be identified using criteria developed by the state leadership team as schools that implement the principles of RTI-B with a high level of fidelity. Model of Demonstration schools or districts will be considered for mentorship of neighboring schools and districts who are working towards implementation.
 - c) Create opportunities for professional development and/or discussions throughout the state (e.g., presentations at conferences, CORE region trainings)
 - d) Recognize exemplary districts and schools as Model of Demonstration schools/districts with regard to training and implementation efforts
- 3. Political Support:** The state will provide political support of the RTI2-B Framework by sharing annual reports on district- and school-level activities, soliciting feedback from stakeholders across the state, and keeping the RTI2-B Framework a priority.
- 4. Policy:** The state will provide a RTI2-B manual and school implementation guide. The statewide leadership team will create and sustain an action plan for maintaining the framework throughout the state. Action planning should occur at regularly scheduled meetings and should include the state RTI2-B goal, team member roles and responsibilities, action items, and deadlines.
- 5. Training:** The department will help support TBSP's efforts in training state-, district-, and school-level RTI2-B coaches (e.g., school psychologists, behavior specialists, social workers, and school counselors) to build capacity and promote sustainability.
- 6. Coaching:** The state will support a coaching model. At the state level, this is the recognition of demonstration schools and connecting those schools to neighboring schools beginning implementation or searching for implementation support beyond the TBSP.
- 7. Evaluation:** The state will work with the TBSPs to ensure that schools and districts are supported in implementation and sustainability.
- 8. Behavioral Expertise:** The state will remain well informed of all the resources available from local and national universities, other state funded projects, and national projects that could benefit the regional support contract, districts, and schools.
- 9. Demonstration Schools:** The department and TSBP together will identify Model of Demonstration schools and/or districts and ask these schools to participate in coaching networks and communities of practices to assist in implementation efforts of other schools.

2.2 District-wide Leadership Team

Sustaining RTI2-B in a school requires systemic support beyond an individual school. It is important to organize multiple schools at the district level so that a common vision, language, and experience are established across the district. The implementation of RTI2-B requires a hands-on and highly committed leadership team. This team is essential to both high fidelity and sustainability of RTI2-B.

The primary goal of the district's RTI2 leadership team is to ensure the success of all students through high-quality instruction, interventions, and support for academics and behavior. The RTI2 leadership team also guides the district's action planning and assessment processes; coordinates training, coaching, and evaluation activities related to RTI2-B; and creates changes in district procedures that will support long-term use of RTI2-B.

The leadership team at the district level should include representatives from a range of stakeholder groups. The district will also designate individuals to serve as external coaches to their schools by providing a "third eye" in the school-wide RTI2 leadership team discussions related to the fidelity of implementation. The role of this team is to organize implementation efforts of RTI2-B at the district level along with keeping it a high profile within the district. The district-wide leadership team should hold meetings at least quarterly to continue collaboration and networking connections and complete a self-assessment annually, at a minimum, to monitor growth and progress of implementation efforts and, subsequently, develop an action plan.



The key components that the leadership team must consider include the following:

- 1. Funding:** The district budget should allocate training and support funds for RTI2-B as determined through the evaluation, implementation, and data-review processes. District implementation of RTI2-B includes a systemic examination of current resources, curriculum, staff, and resources that can support implementation as well as what is needed. The result is that funding can be streamlined and more systematically allocated to ensure students are supported within the current funding.
- 2. Visibility:** District administration should support school personnel when implementing and aligning initiatives (e.g., shield staff from competing demands, change language to align RTI2-B with new initiatives) to allow RTI2-B to thrive and grow within the schools. The team should identify and implement dissemination strategies to ensure stakeholders are informed about activities and accomplishments (e.g., website, newsletter, professional development days, and conference opportunities). Also, the district should develop an acknowledgement system for schools (e.g., awards, newsletter shout-outs, and extra funding support).
- 3. Political Support:** The district should support student social behavior and attendance as one of the top three to five improvement goals and report annually on the activities and outcomes related to student behavior goals and implementation to political stakeholders (e.g., school board, parent organizations, local news, and community agencies).
- 4. Policy:** The district should support the framework by completing a self-assessment at least annually and developing an action plan for maintaining RTI2-B implementation. Data and outcomes should be reviewed semi-annually to refine policy and seamlessly integrate district and school initiatives (e.g., RTI2, bully prevention programs, and character education programs).
- 5. Training:** The district-wide leadership team should give priority to identifying and adopting evidence-based training curriculum and professional development practices. The district team should prioritize ongoing investment in building local capacity to maintain RTI2-B implementation. The district will establish a plan for continuous regeneration and updating of training (e.g., region- or state-wide refresher trainings, new personnel trainings, region- or state-wide online trainings).
- 6. Coaching:** With support from the statewide leadership team, the district should create a coaching network that establishes and sustains RTI2-B. The leadership team should clearly identify and define the coaching responsibilities and expectations. The coaches will be trained by the statewide leadership team and receive ongoing assistance from the state as needed. The district should assign each school an external coach to assist in implementation efforts. After a school implements the RTI2-B Framework for two years, coaches will connect the school to a community of practice for continued sustainability.
- 7. Evaluation:** The district leadership team should develop an evaluation process and schedule for assessing the extent to which schools are using RTI2-B, the fidelity of implementation, the impact of RTI2-B on student outcomes, and the extent to which the district's action plan is being implemented. Additionally, the district should celebrate and acknowledge schools for significant outcomes and accomplishments.
- 8. Behavioral Expertise:** The district team should include individuals with behavioral expertise to ensure implementation integrity of RTI2-B practices in the following areas: (a) training, (b) coaching, and (c) evaluation. The team will be responsible for promoting effective academic instruction and school-wide behavior support concurrently by encouraging and supporting professional development in academics and behavior.
- 9. Demonstration Schools:** Districts/Schools that have adopted and maintained RTI2-B will be considered a Model of Demonstration district/school and should support other districts/schools in improving their implementation efforts.

Team Composition

The district's RTI2 leadership team is comprised of a group of stakeholders whose primary responsibilities, roles, and activities address the prevention and reduction of problem behaviors. The leadership team manages and evaluates resources to support RTI2-B teams within their schools. Membership on the district's RTI2-B leadership team requires a designated chair/external coach and will be comprised of a diverse and representative group of stakeholders.

Besides the designated chair/external coach(es), the leadership team may include representatives from the following areas:

- Curriculum and instruction
- Special education
- Elementary administrator
- Secondary administrator
- Classroom teacher
- English language learners teacher
- Federal programs supervisor
- Mental health
- Data management
- Transportation
- Attendance
- Safe and supportive schools
- School psychology
- School social worker
- School counselor
- Behavior management
- Parents
- Students

District Team Members and Responsibilities

- **District Leader/External Coach** is the chairperson of the RTI2 leadership team. This individual should have some flexibility in his/her daily responsibilities in order to oversee the day-to-day RTI2-B activities across the district.
- **Administrators/Supervisors** represent specific department(s) in action planning and implementation of RTI2-B. They may include:
 - Curriculum and instruction supervisor or designee
 - Special education supervisor or designee
 - Federal programs supervisor
 - Transportation supervisor or designee
 - Attendance supervisor or designee
 - Safe and supportive schools supervisor or designee
- **Educational Staff** represent general education, special education, and/or specialized education personnel (i.e., English language learners, gifted education, etc.) These individuals ensure that the school plan can be implemented throughout the entire school in a manner that enhances instruction for all.
- **Specialists** assist in the recommendation of research-based behavioral screeners and/or interventions. They may include one or all of the individual representatives below:
 - School counselor
 - Behavior specialist
 - Data coordinator
 - Mental health professional
 - School psychologist
 - School social worker
- **Parent Representative** will be able to lift parental concerns and provide informative feedback to the district team. An additional purpose of this leadership role is to strengthen district communication about RTI2-B to parents and to community stakeholders.

2.3 School-wide Leadership Team

In order to successfully implement RTI2-B at an individual school level, a systematic approach is required, which includes four common components:

1. Administrative support and school commitment to implementation with fidelity
2. A strong leadership team led by the school's RTI2-B internal coach. An internal coach is an individual within the school who leads the RTI2 implementation, monitors fidelity, ensures implementation, and provides expertise in RTI2-B
3. Effective communication between the RTI2-B district leadership team to distribute latest information and best practices to each school
4. Consistent data collection and use of data in problem solving and decision making

The principal leads the work of the teachers, support staff, families, community, and students. The principal should provide the opportunity to serve on the school-based RTI2 leadership team to members of the school community, including students.

Team Composition

The school-wide RTI2 leadership team is composed of a group of stakeholders whose primary responsibilities, roles, and activities address the prevention and reduction of problem behaviors. The school team oversees the day-to-day implementation of RTI2-B, ensuring that tools for successful implementation are available. This team requires a designated chair/internal coach. Besides the designated chair/internal coach, the school team includes representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- Administrator
- General education teacher
- English language learners teacher
- Special education teacher
- School psychologist
- School social worker
- School counselor
- Behavior specialist
- Mental health specialist
- Data Coordinator
- Support staff
- Parent
- Student

School Team Members and Responsibilities

- **Chair/Internal Coach** is the school-wide RTI2-B team chair. This person should have some flexibility in his/her daily responsibilities in order to oversee the day-to-day activities in the school.
- **School Administrator** provides primary administrative support and sets the expectations for successful RTI2-B implementation within the school. He/she may appoint a school-level RTI2-B chair/internal coach and a team of representatives to serve on the school level.
- **General and Special Education Teachers** serve as active members of the team to critique RTI2-B implementation and make recommendations for successful implementation.
- **Specialists** include the school psychologist, social worker,, counselor, behavior-management specialist, mental health professional, and data management personnel. These team members guide the successful implementation of RTI2-B protocols and procedures. Their responsibility is to assure team recognition of the importance of understanding and following protocols and procedures for maintaining the fidelity for all three tiers of intervention.
- **Support Staff** serve as active members of the team and share concerns from their unique perspective. Members who represent areas of the school such as cafeteria, office, transportation, as well as paraprofessionals, should be considered for team membership.
- **Parent Representative** serves as an active member of the team by sharing parental perspectives and concerns, thus providing informative feedback to RTI2-B team. However, any time individual student data is being discussed, parents should not be present to protect the confidentiality of the students.
- **Student Representative** serves as an active member of the team by sharing student perspectives and concerns, thus providing informative feedback to RTI2-B team. However, any time individual student data is being discussed, students should not be present to protect the confidentiality of their peers.

All team members are expected to assist in day-to-day activities in the school for successful RTI2-B.

Teacher Leadership

Each classroom is a reflection of the RTI2-B school plan and the classroom leader is the teacher. Teachers are critical members of the school leadership team; they are the individuals who spend the most time with students and their families. RTI2-B is designed to increase instructional time, student interactions, problem-solving, social and emotional health, and the school climate. Therefore, each teacher's classroom is a microcosm of school-wide RTI2-B implementation.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the school-based team is to organize implementation efforts of RTI2-B at the school level and keep it a high priority. The school team can also access the supports and training available through TBSP to assist with implementation, fidelity, data analysis, and sustainability. The team will focus on the following areas:



The key components that the leadership team must consider include the following:

- **Funding:** The school leadership team should develop budget recommendations for training staff, intervention support, Tier I sustainability and school-wide activities, or other expenses related to the implementation and sustainability of RTI2-B. School implementation of RTI2-B includes a systemic map of current resources, curriculum, staff, and resources. The funding may, therefore, be streamlined and more systematically allocated to ensure students are supported.
- **Visibility:** The school should disseminate information to all stakeholders, consistently model the plan for all stakeholders (i.e. reinforce and teach the plan, use data-based decisions, support the school team), foster staff ownership and continuous professional development, and support sustainability of RTI2-B. Recent studies found that a heavy investment from staff helped sustain the framework (Andreou et al., 2014). Staff turnover seems to be a hindering element in sustaining an RTI2-approach to behavior. Staff ownership and active participation in implementation can counteract the effect of turnover. A majority of the school's faculty and staff should support the implementation of the RTI2-B framework before building a plan.
- **Political Support:** The school leadership team should solicit feedback, conduct data analysis, train and support new staff, and maintain a school-wide priority on systematic RTI2-B interventions and support in order to continue to increase student success in all areas.
- **Policy:** The school should develop and continually revise school practices. Teams should work to eliminate ineffective practices, update handbooks, and work to integrate other initiatives into the RTI2-B implementation practices. There should be cohesiveness so that there is one seamless plan.
- **Training:** The school leadership team should plan and execute initial training provided by personnel with RTI2-B expertise, refresher trainings, ongoing professional development, and continuous teaching of the plan.
- **Coaching:** Internal (school team lead) and external coaches (district staff) will have a key role in assisting school teams during the day-to-day practices of implementing and maintaining the program. Internal and external coaches will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the framework as well as ongoing learning and training.
- **Evaluation:** The school leadership team will consistently evaluate and analyze data from systematic behavior screeners and implement fidelity measures, social validity measures, and sustainability measures. These measures can help provide a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It will also help the school's level of success in the overall goal of the program, which is to help students learn appropriate behavior and succeed academically. This strongly aligns with the TEAM vision guidance.
- **Behavioral Expertise:** Once schools are equipped and sustaining Tier I, they should seek other trainings and resources to help build capacity of the framework. Some examples of additional training and resources could include the following topics: informal behavior plans or contracts, self-monitoring strategies, data collections tools, mentorship training, peer tutoring, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following graphic, which is included in the *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Implementation Blueprint* (2015), lays the foundation for the RTI2-B goals. The major functions of the RTI2-B school leadership team include the following: making agreements, creating a data based action plan, implementing the plan, and evaluating implementation, fidelity, and outcomes.

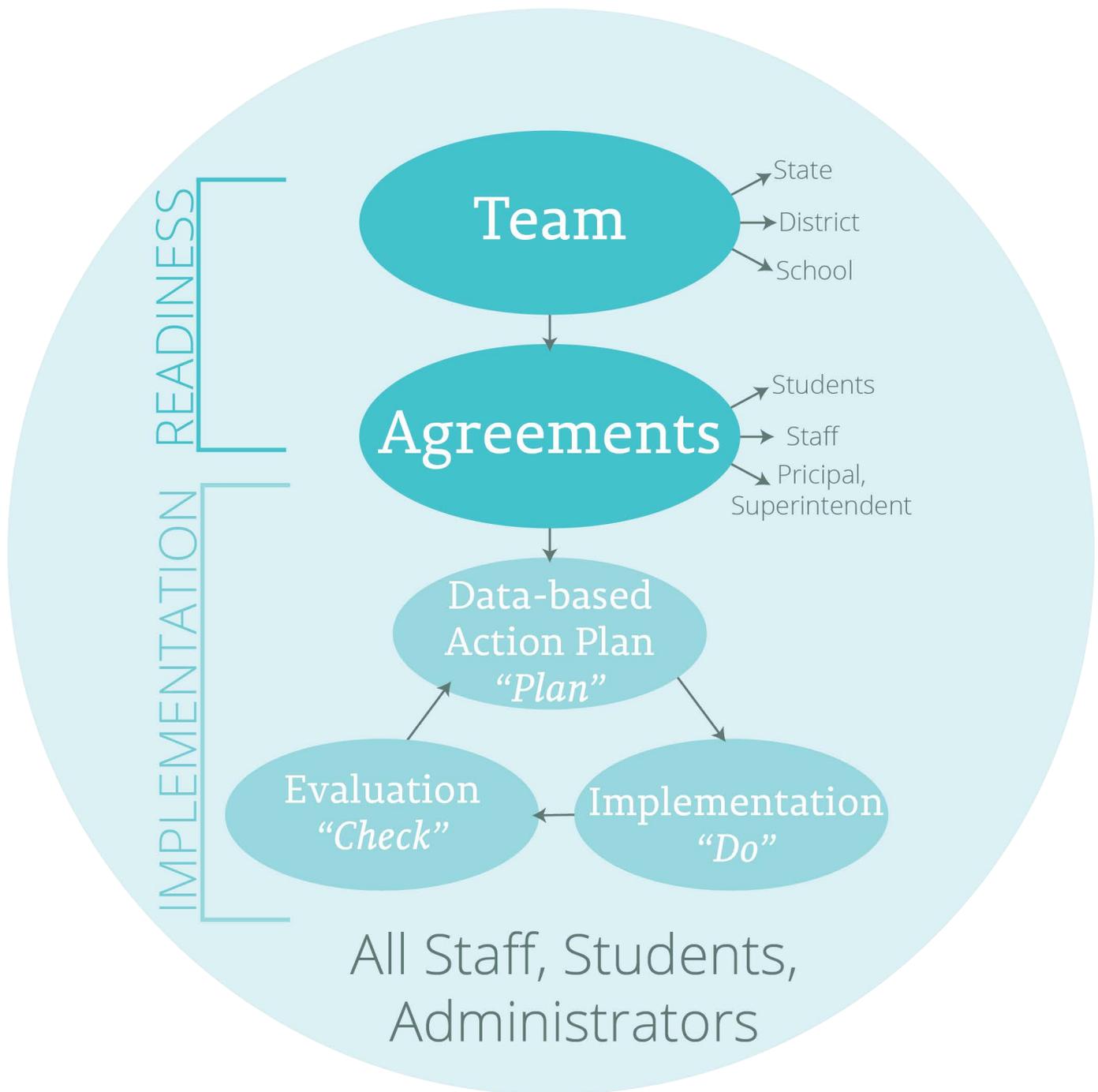


Figure 2 From *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Implementation Blueprint*, version 18, October 19, 2015

2.4 Student Leadership Team

Schools that have shared leadership support systems in place that engage students rather than demand student compliance have less discipline problems, increased student achievement, and higher graduation rates (Bruening, 2014). Developing a RTI2 student leadership team is an important opportunity to empower students. By gathering input from students and involving students in the RTI2-B process, schools move from actions being “done to students” to “working with students” (Smyth, 2006). Students become more engaged and motivated because their voices are heard. There is a decrease in discipline problems and an increase in academic achievement and graduation rates. Additionally, the school climate becomes more positive, allowing teachers to teach and students to learn.

The RTI2 student leadership team should be comprised of a diverse and representative group of students. This team should include representatives from all grade levels (elementary may choose to begin at third grade), a demographic distribution similar to the school populations, and academic and behavioral diversity. For schools with a student population that is younger than third grade, staff should consider ways for students to share their thoughts and ideas in a more informal manner.



Component 3: Tier I Procedures

TIER I

ALL

The school climate and culture nurtures and supports the learning of each individual student. Behavior expectations are clearly articulated, modelled, and reinforced. Universal screening for internalizing and externalizing behaviors are used as well as a whole school fidelity measure, such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) to guide school decision making and planning.



3.1 Overview of Tier I

All students in the school should receive Tier I instruction and supports. Tier I is the structure that establishes the culture, behavioral expectations, climate, and supports needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students. The focus is on prevention through explicitly taught and clearly defined expectations, acknowledgement of positive behavior, consistent consequences for problem behavior, and continuous collection and use of data to make decisions.

3.2 Implementing Tier I

The implementation process for Tier I is managed and coordinated by a school-wide RTI2-B leadership team. The members of this team should have the leadership capacity to support the staff in implementing effective practices with fidelity. A team approach—rather than just the building administrator—to implementation is helpful for increasing staff investment and sustainability.

There are two main questions to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of Tier I:

1. Are the programs that comprise the universal supports implemented with fidelity?
2. Are students achieving the desired student outcomes?

The school-wide PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (Algozzine et al., 2014) is one way to evaluate effectiveness and can be found in the RTI2-B Implementation Guide.

Tennessee RTI²-B Model

TIER I

ALL

The school climate and culture nurtures and supports the learning of each individual student. Behavior expectations are clearly articulated, modelled, and reinforced. Universal screening for internalizing and externalizing behaviors are used as well as a whole school fidelity measure, such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) to guide school decision making and planning.

TIER II

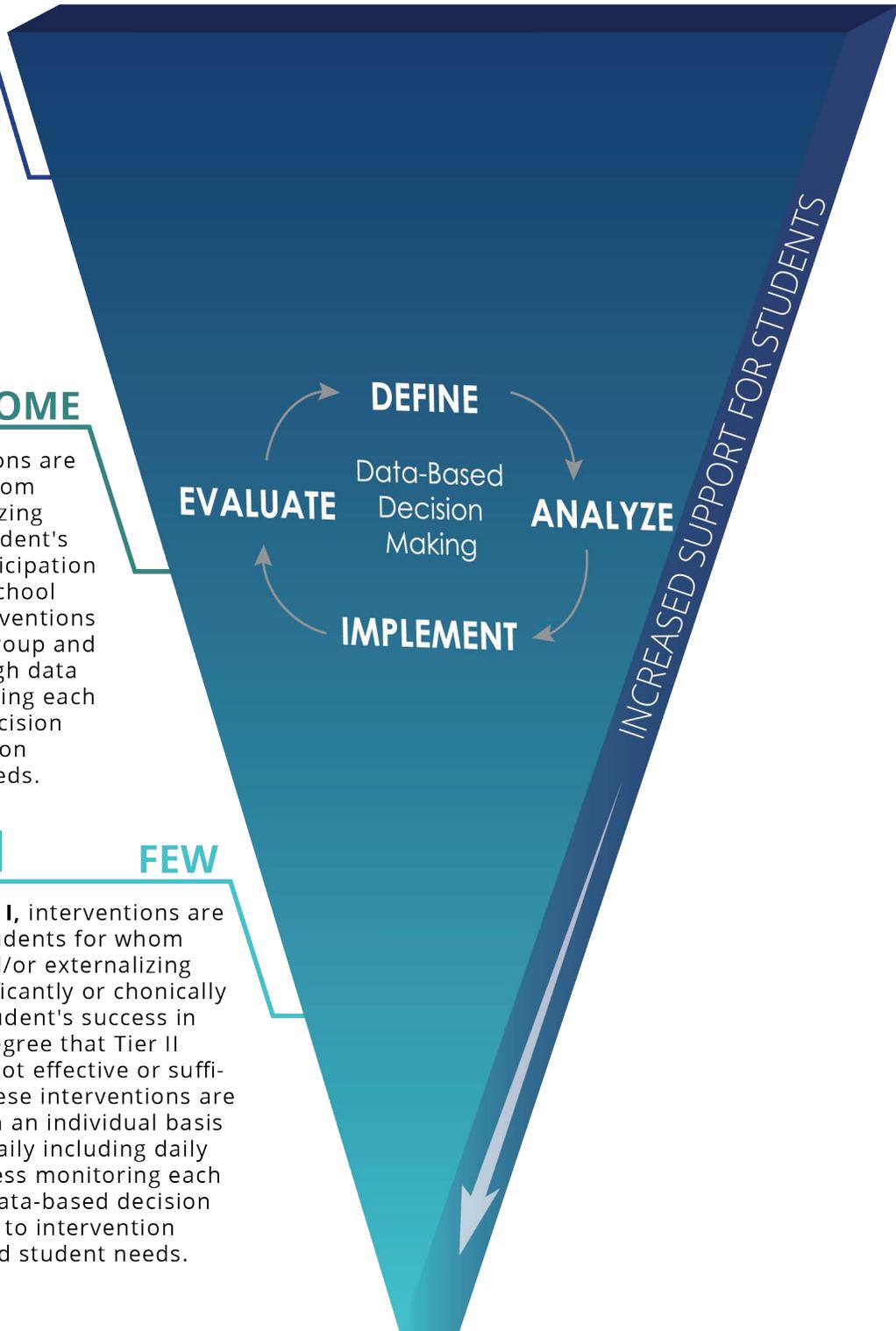
SOME

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are impacting the student's success in learning, including participation as a valuable member of the school learning environment. These interventions are usually provided for a small group and are not necessarily daily, although data may occur daily. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.

TIER III

FEW

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are significantly or chronically impacting the student's success in learning to a degree that Tier II intervention were not effective or sufficiently intensive. These interventions are usually provided on an individual basis and often occur daily including daily monitoring. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.



3.2.1 Universal Screening Procedures

A universal screener is a brief assessment given to all students to determine which students are at risk, at the expected level, and above the expected level. A universal screener can be designed to screen any area of concern or interest including: academics, school climate, social skills, language, externalized behaviors (e.g., physical or verbal aggression, self-injury, and disruption) and/or internalized behaviors (e.g., anxiety, depression, withdrawal, and isolation). When appropriate, standardized universal screening tools and procedures should be used to identify students at risk for behavioral difficulties using norm-based cut scores or criteria. If a school has a large number of students identified as being at risk for academic and/or behavioral difficulties, a school support team may establish relative norms instead of national norms to identify students who need more intensive behavioral supports. As with academics, care should be taken that any screener or assessment tool be free from cultural, ethnic, or language bias. Additionally, schools should be monitoring attendance data. A student at risk of chronic absenteeism can be identified by the end of September.

Universal screening helps to identify students performing at or above the level considered necessary for achieving long-term success (general outcome measures) and helps to identify students who are at risk for academic or behavioral difficulties. Universal screening data can also serve as a benchmark for measuring the improvement of a group, class, grade, school, or district (i.e., a reduction in the percentage of students identified to be at risk for academic and/or behavioral difficulties). Schools should use valid and reliable universal screeners for academics and behavior that are appropriate for effective data-based decision making.

Successful students demonstrate strong academic skills and behaviors, which include following directions, following routines, problem solving, conflict resolution, etc. Externalized and internalized behaviors can impact the student's participation and access to instruction.



For example, a student who struggles to follow directions is attending a math class. The teacher is providing instructions on how to find the angle of a triangle. The student is able to follow the first two steps but then becomes confused and is not able to problem solve the step they are missing. This student is now at risk of missing the valuable instruction and will not master the skill without intervention. Intervention in following directions along with an accommodation such as written or picture directions could help prevent additional missed instruction for the student.

Universal behavior screening designed to assess externalized and internalized behaviors can help schools identify students who may need behavior intervention. **However, just as with academics, a universal screener is only one source of data and should not be used exclusively.**

In grades K–8, a review of multiple records such as grades, attendance, and behavioral data may provide early warning signs for intervention. In grades 9–12, there are multiple sources of data, such as: previous referrals, intervention progress monitoring data, test scores, and report cards.

In grades 3–8, student data will include, academic performance, annual assessment results, and results from universal screeners for academics and behavior. These data tools should be collected, combined for a records review, and incorporated into an Early Warning System (EWS). In grades 9–12, a record review may also provide important information such as grades, attendance and behavioral data that may provide early warning signs for necessary intervention. It is recommended that behavioral screening occurs, at the latest, in the beginning (fall) of the school year following instructions for the particular screening tool.

Universal screening for behaviors might include standardized teacher-completed rating scales on each individual student or whole class and/or a systematic review of student discipline data (e.g., office discipline referrals or classroom behavioral/discipline data). Schools should also consider teacher, parent, or student requests for assistance for behavioral screening.

For all grades, it is essential that behavioral universal screening occur at least once in the beginning (fall) of the school year (or per instructions for the particular screening tool). However, it is best practice to conduct universal behavior screening three times per school year: at the beginning (fall), middle (winter), and end (spring). Teams should follow instructions for particular screening tools when selecting universal screening times.

Families expect students to be assessed on academics during the school year. The screening of behavior, however, is fairly new. For positive support of the screening, it is critical that families and students are informed of the purpose of the screener ahead of administration. They should also be informed of how the results will be viewed and what actions will be taken to support those students determined at risk or below expected levels.

If a school team is using office discipline referrals (ODRs) as the only source of data for behavioral screening, review of ODRs that each student has accumulated over the school year should occur on a more frequent basis (e.g., reviewing cumulative ODRs monthly).

District RTI2 leadership teams should consult with their RTI2-B technical assistance provider to select universal screening tools and procedures and to establish specific criteria for identifying students who are at risk for behavioral difficulties. Information on tools for conducting universal behavior screening are provided in the RTI2-B Implementation Guide.

Internalizing and Externalizing behavior concerns

Universal screening can identify students at risk for internalizing and externalizing behavior concerns. Students identified with a specific concern may receive support in Tier I and Tier II or Tier III interventions aligned to their need. For example, a student struggling with social anxiety has a support plan for class and is provided intervention in a small group setting for social skills deficits.

If a child is suspected of having an educational disability or if there is concern regarding mental health of a student, the team must refer the student for additional assessment. The parents of the student must be involved and provide informed, active, written parental consent for additional assessments to occur. Mental health concerns should be diagnosed only by a qualified mental health professional, not within schools. RTI2-leadership/data teams should consider recommendations of mental health professionals if a diagnosis has been established.

If at any time an educator suspects significant concerns, the situation must be reported to administrators, parents, and district offices, and the district emergency plan for students in crisis must be followed.

3.2.1a Characteristics of a universal screening tool

The tool selected needs to be simple to administer; focused on the area of concern; culturally, racially, and economically unbiased; and norm-referenced. The district and school leadership teams must have a clear understanding of the purpose of the screener and what the results of the assessment mean for each student. The school leadership team also should educate the schools staff, parents, and students on the screener and the importance of the results.

As with all assessments, this is one measure, but not the only piece of data that should be considered when determining which students will need intervention and support.

3.2.2. School Climate

School climate refers to the quality of school life and aspects of the school environment that make students feel academically challenged, physically, socially and emotionally safe and valued, and connected to their school settings. Building a positive school climate depends on contributions of the entire school community, including students, teachers, administrators, and parents, to create learning environments where a child can succeed. School climate improvement efforts aim to transform the whole school environment and encompass three broad dimensions: (1) school engagement, (2) school safety, and (3) school environment.

Effective leaders recognize that while they may initiate and coordinate school climate improvement, everyone is responsible.

Utilizing district- and school-level leadership is important to ensure that the guiding principles of establishing a positive school climate are met and the interventions and supports are being implemented as intended (fidelity). The leadership team for both district and school levels should be representative of all stakeholders. In addition, systematic student leadership and input should be encouraged to ensure that students play an active role in establishing and creating the RTI2-B Framework.

Developing the social emotional learning skills of students will positively impact school climate, improve student capacity to engage in academic learning, and prepare students to meet college and career readiness standards. In order to meet rigorous standards, students must be able to regulate their emotions when they become frustrated, collaborate with their peers, communicate their ideas, and take the perspective of others (Yoder, 2013).

Social Teaching Practices

Student-centered discipline

Disciplinary strategies are developmentally appropriate for students.

Teacher language

The teacher talks to the students with a focus on encouraging students.

Responsibility and choice

Students are provided opportunities to make responsible decisions.

Warmth and support

The teacher creates a classroom where the students know that the teacher cares.

Instructional Teaching Practices

Coopertive learning

Students work together toward a collective goal in accomplishing an instructional task.

Classroom discussions

Students and teachers have a dialogue about content.

Self-assessment and self-reflections

Students actively think about their own work.

Balanced instruction

Multiple and appropriate instructional strategies are used.

Academic press and expectations

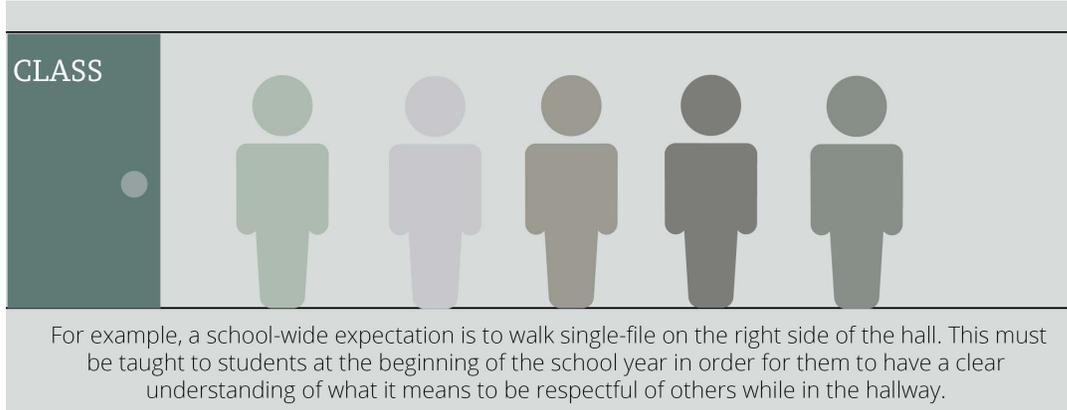
The teacher provides meaningful and challenging work and believes that all students can achieve rigorous work.

Competence building

The teacher helps develop students social-emotional skills through the typical instructional cycle.

3.2.3 School-wide Behavioral Expectations

Tier I instruction is provided to all students within the school. This is true for both academics and behavior. Any behavior we expect from students must be explicitly taught.



Tier I instruction incorporates both school-wide and class-wide strategies that are applied to address the needs of all students. Instructional practices within Tier I have a focus on defining, teaching, and encouraging expectations in all settings and with all students and staff.

Developing a set of school-wide expectations is one of the first steps in the development of the RTI2-B plan for a school. Schools should create three to five positively stated expectations (e.g., be respectful, take pride, and give your best effort) that are applicable to all settings in the school (e.g., cafeteria, hallways, restrooms, classrooms, outside common area) and address important social outcomes for the school. The expectations should be posted throughout the school to serve as reminders for staff and students. Schools then create a behavioral expectation matrix. The behavioral expectation matrix is a visual representation of the school-wide behavioral expectations within each setting. It is a way of operationally defining and describing what each expectation looks like within a given setting. For example, being responsible in the cafeteria may look like cleaning up after yourself, whereas being respectful may involve including others in your conversations and speaking at an appropriate volume.

Teaching School-Wide Expectations

All adults in the school setting are responsible for modeling and teaching the school-wide behavioral expectations to all students in the school. Schools should develop a plan for teaching expectations to students, including the development of lesson plans specific to the different locations in the school, as well as an explanation of when, where, and by whom the lesson plans will be taught. **For example, some schools set up stations and have students rotate through the stations to learn about the expectations in the different settings. At each station, there are "cue cards" for role play activities which other students in the small group then rotate against the behavior expectation matrix. Students then discuss why they believe the behavior described on the "cue card" either met, or did not meet, the expectations and, if necessary, how to correct the behavior.**

School teams should also develop a plan for continued review and re-teaching of the expectations throughout the year to ensure maintenance and mastery by the students. It is important to allow students the opportunity to practice the expectations and to then provide them with feedback. Additionally, to ensure that students take ownership over the school-wide expectations, it may be important to include a rationale for each expectation (e.g., "It is important to be respectful of ourselves and others in the classroom so that we all feel included and can do our best work.").

Acknowledging Appropriate Student Behavior

Schools should develop systems for acknowledging when students exhibit positive behaviors. Developing a school-wide acknowledgement system helps to foster a positive school climate because faculty and staff focus on students' positive behaviors rather than the inappropriate behaviors. Positive school climate helps both adults and students feel safe, both physically and emotionally. Focusing attention primarily on the positive behavior and positive behavior creates a safe learning environment for students and a safe working environment for adults.

A key feature of an acknowledgement system is providing behavior-specific praise when students are engaging in appropriate behaviors. Research has shown that behavior-specific praise is an effective classroom management strategy for reducing inappropriate student behavior and increasing appropriate pro-social behaviors. (Allday, R. A., Hinkson-Lee, K., Hudson, T., Neilsen-Gatti, S., Kleinke, A., & Russel, C. S., 2012). Behavior-specific praise is a way of providing students feedback about their effort to engage in appropriate behavior that increases the likelihood of engaging in those appropriate behaviors in the future. Specific praise provides feedback necessary for learning. Telling a student, "You did such a great job showing respect by raising your hand and waiting to be called on!" informs a student of the appropriate behavior to exhibit again in the future. A general praise statement of "Great job!" does not provide the specific feedback to inform future appropriate actions. Further, behavior-specific praise on encouraging language should vary by age. Teachers may use different language when acknowledging a kindergarten student's efforts as opposed to a twelfth grader. Praising and encouraging language should be an ongoing form of feedback and the foundation of any school acknowledgement system.

In addition to behavior-specific praise, schools should set up a shared system throughout the school to reinforce appropriate behaviors. For example, some schools hand out paper tickets when students are "caught being good." Other schools use online point systems to keep track of socially appropriate behaviors. The ticket/tokens/points can later be exchanged for intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Schools can structure their reinforcement systems in a variety of ways; some schools may choose to do school-wide celebrations, some may have a school store, and some may have reinforcement systems set up at the individual classroom level. When developing an acknowledgement system, leadership teams should consider the needs of the students, the current level of office discipline referrals, student input, and other relevant factors that are unique to each school. These considerations will help a school determine how frequently students will need reinforcement as a way of maintaining student interest and motivation.

Responding to Inappropriate Student Behavior

School teams should work together to determine what student behaviors are considered inappropriate at their school. It is helpful to divide inappropriate behaviors into "major" behaviors versus "minor" behaviors. Major behaviors are managed at the office or principal level, while minor behaviors are managed at the classroom level. An Office Discipline Referral (ODR) form should also be created to match the major versus minor behavior grid. A school staff member should complete the ODR form when inappropriate behaviors occur in order to track student behavior. The data from the forms should be entered into a database to easily track all inappropriate behaviors. This information should be used by the school-based leadership to guide decision making about interventions.

3.2.3a Students Entering Mid-Term

Procedures should be in place for students who enter mid-term or any time after the universal screening is completed. A plan should be in place for conducting universal screening for academic and behavioral difficulties for these students. The plan should include what decisions will be made based on the screening data and who will make these decisions.

Additionally, students must be taught the school-wide behavioral expectations and routines. Assuming a student knows the expectations is risky and can set the student up for failure. The behavior expectations vary for each school, even within districts so any student new to a school will benefit from clear explicit instruction in the behavior expectations.

Each individual is responsible for maintaining a positive school climate and culture. For a student who has not previously attended a school implementing RTI2-B, this level of individual responsibility may be a new experience. Use of peer mentors or members of the student leadership team can help entering students understand their role in creating a positive environment for all as well as develop their own leadership skills.

3.2.3b Classroom Management

Students spend the majority of their time within schools in the classroom. In order for teachers to maximize teaching time and provide meaningful instructional interactions, they must have effective classroom management. Simonsen et al (2008) identify five categories of classroom management techniques:

1. maximizing structure and predictability;
2. posting, teaching, reviewing, monitoring, and reinforcing expectations;
3. actively engaging students in observable ways;
4. using a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behavior; and
5. using a continuum of strategies to respond to inappropriate behavior.

These five categories are also reflected in the social emotional learning strategies of student centered discipline, teacher language, responsibility and choice, warmth and support, cooperative learning, self-reflection and self-assessment, setting up your classroom, establishing and teaching classroom expectations, and accessing support.

Student Centered Discipline

Student-centered discipline refers to the types of classroom management strategies teachers' use in their classrooms. In order to be effective at student-centered discipline, teachers should use developmentally appropriate disciplinary strategies that motivate students to want to behave appropriately in the classroom. Such discipline occurs when students have opportunities to be self-directive and have some say in what happens in the classroom. In a strong and positive approach to discipline, teachers do not attempt to over manage their students, nor do they use punitive measures to get students to behave appropriately. Furthermore, students and teachers should develop shared norms and values in the classroom. This strategy allows students to connect the rules to the overarching vision of how the classroom is run and increases student ownership.

Similarly, teachers should enact proactive classroom management strategies that are aligned to the norms and vision for the classroom, and teachers utilizing management strategies consistently. If a student breaks a rule, the consequences should be logical in relation to the rule that was broken. For example, if a student pushes another student in line, an appropriate consequence would be to line up last for the rest of the week rather than lose gym or recess for the week, a consequence unrelated to the incident. Through the development of consistent and logical rules and consequences, students begin to learn to regulate their own behavior and problem solve difficult situations that arise in the classroom.



Teacher Language

“Teacher language” refers to how the teachers talk to students. Teachers should encourage student effort and work, restating what the student did and what that student needs to do in order to improve. Teacher language should include a behavior specific praise. In addition, teacher language should encourage students to monitor and regulate their own behavior, not just correct behavior (e.g., “What strategies have we learned when we come across a problem that we are not sure how to do?”).

Responsibility and Choice

Responsibility and choice refer to how the teacher allows students to make responsible decisions about their work in the classroom. The classroom environment that promotes responsibility and choice allows students to participate in democratic norms; this means students provide meaningful input into the development of the norms and procedures of the classroom as well as the academic content or how the academic content is learned.

Democratic norms provide structures so that the students have a voice in the classroom through controlled and meaningful choices. This is not to say that students are given full control or that any choice by a student is honored. It does, however, mean that students are given an opportunity for choice and are then held accountable for the consequence of that choice.

Warmth and Support

Warmth and support refers to the academic and social support that students receive from teachers and peers. The teacher creates a classroom where the students know that teachers care about them. Teachers can demonstrate that they care about their students by asking students questions (academic and nonacademic), following up with students when they have a problem or concern, providing the teacher’s own anecdotes or stories, and acting in ways in which students know that taking risks and asking questions are safe in the classroom. In addition, teachers should create structures in the classroom where students feel included and appreciated by peers and teachers. Teachers can do this through morning meetings, small moments throughout the day or class, or projects in which students have a chance to share what they have learned.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning refers to a specific instructional task in which teachers have students work together toward a collective goal. Teachers ask students to do more than group work; students are actively working with their peers around content in a meaningful way. To implement cooperative learning effectively, teachers include five basic elements: (1) building positive interdependence, (2) accepting individual accountability, (3) promoting one another’s successes, (4) applying interpersonal and social skills, and (5) supporting group processing (the group discusses progress toward achieving a goal). In order for this to have an impact on student learning, as well as social and emotional skills, students need to collaboratively process how they work together and monitor their progress toward their goal.

Self-Reflections and Self-Assessment

Self-reflection and self-assessment are instructional tasks whereby teachers ask students to actively think about their own work. In order for students to self-reflect on their work, teachers should ask them to assess their own work against performance standards that have either been provided by the teacher or co-created in the classroom. Self-reflection should include a plan for continuous improvement. In order to assist students with this process, teachers must develop goals and priorities with students. If students do not know what they are working toward, they will not be able to identify when the goal was met and will be less invested in the classroom.

Setting Up Your Classroom

Creating an environment that is predictable, safe, and easily accessible for all students allows them to feel included in the classroom. This can be done through the physical arrangement of the classroom, traffic flow, visual displays, and seating arrangements. The physical arrangement of the classroom should be set up in a way that minimizes distractions, promotes student interactions, and is easy to navigate for all students.

In addition to creating a visually appealing and safe physical environment, teachers should establish an attention signal for students. The attention signal should be a simple signal that can be used throughout the school and should easily gain the attention of students. Time should be taken at the beginning of the school year to teach the signal to students and explain the rationale for the signal. This signal should include a teacher behavior followed by student behavior that demonstrates that they are quiet, alert, and ready for instruction.

Establishing and Teaching Classroom Expectations

Utilizing the school-wide expectations, each class should review these expectations and discuss what they should look like in the classroom. Structured lessons should be included for each school-wide expectation within the classroom. To ensure that students take ownership of the classroom expectations, it is important students understand why the expectation is important or necessary for a positive culture and climate. Students should be provided time to discuss what expectations look like in the classroom. One strategy that may help students conceptualize the expectation is to develop examples and non-examples of each expectation. Classroom expectations should be posted throughout the classroom for students and adults to reference. The classroom teacher should provide explicit instruction on these expectations. Students can participate in leadership roles by acting out or explaining the expectations to the class and to later provide instruction to a new classmate who enters the school mid-year. In high schools, the students should be an active participant in the development of the school expectations and the instruction for students on those expectations.

Accessing Support

Administrators should create a protocol for teachers to follow when they need additional support, and schools can offer customized support and guidance for their teachers. This could include collaborating with teachers, school psychologist school counselors to problem solve situations, providing supervision and feedback, creating a mentoring program for new teachers, providing professional development opportunities, and establishing professional learning communities.

3.3 Data-Based Decision Making Procedures

Each school will have a school-level RTI2 leadership team, which will meet regularly (i.e., monthly) to evaluate RTI2. The team monitors universal screener data, tiered fidelity inventory of implementation, office discipline referral data, screener data, survey data, and social validity data to make data-based decisions.

Typically, the RTI2 meetings are designed to examine student outcome (academic and behavioral) data to ensure that Tier I instruction and practices are meeting the needs of 80-85 percent of students, Tier II interventions are meeting the needs of 10-15 percent of students, and Tier III is meeting the needs of 3-5 percent of students. This also involves looking at school data to evaluate the fidelity of implementation of effective practices at Tiers I, II, and III. As all three tiers are developed and implemented, the school should use internal and external coaches (roles and responsibilities defined in Component 2: Leadership) to guide the implementation of RTI2-B. It is recommended that schools rely on existing teaming/collaboration structures when organizing teams related to RTI2-B. The scope and structure of the team may vary from school to school depending on current structures and school size. For example, the school support team may have sub-teams such as separate Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III coordinating teams, a combined Tier I/Tier II team, and/or a combined Tier II/III team. Other schools may have one team that supports the work at Tiers I, II, and III. Additionally, current school teams related to RTI2 implementation can extend their work beyond academics to include behavior, thereby minimizing confusion or duplication of efforts.

The following chart summarizes the procedures within each tier.

	Progress Monitoring	Fidelity	Evaluating Outcomes
<i>Tier I</i> - 80-85 percent of total student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office discipline referrals (ODRs) Universal screener data Survey data: School Climate Survey Social validity data Attendance data 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review results of fidelity measures Share information with stakeholders to determine next steps and or improvement plan
<i>Tier II</i> - 10-15 percent of total student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected as frequently as daily to weekly Monthl fidelity of intervention and review of student progress Standardized, general procedurs applicable to most behaviors (e.g., Check In/Check Out) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) External Coach Internal Coach Primary Intervention Rating Scale (PRIS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate indicators of successfull implementation Increased parent involvement Reduce repeat discipline referrals Improved attendance rate
<i>Tier III</i> - 3-5 percent of total student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected as frequently as daily to weekly Progress monitor target behavior and replacement behavior Student specific plan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased participation in school activites

3.4 Professional Development for Tier I Instruction

School RTI2-B leadership teams should take time to develop a professional development plan while they organize and structure each tier of the RTI2-B Framework. As they create their RTI2-B Framework, they should develop procedures for training all faculty and staff to implement each feature or intervention. A needs assessment may be a powerful tool in the selection of topics and development of the training timeline. Once schools are implementing RTI2-B, the leadership team should use fidelity data to plan professional development.

3.4.1 Tennessee Behavior Supports Project

Additionally, many supports are available to schools for evaluating, designing, implementing, monitoring, and assessing school climate, environment, and safety through the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project and the Tennessee Department of Education's division of healthy, safe, and supportive schools. TBSP will provide professional development opportunities in-person and via web for schools on developing, implementing, and monitoring the Tier I.



Component 4: Tier II Procedures

4.1 Overview of Tier II

Students at risk for poor academic outcomes often display attention, motivation, and/or self-regulation difficulties that may adversely affect their behavior and learning (Fuchs et al. 2006; Montague, 2007). Tier II addresses the needs of 10–15 percent of students who require intervention or additional supports beyond those offered within Tier I instruction. In Tier II, strategies are proactive and targeted based on students' needs.

Schools should use both academic and behavior universal screening data to identify students who are at risk for behavioral difficulties. Schools should use additional information when making decisions about supports and placement for Tier II interventions, such as: previous grade retention; attendance; academic performance (e.g., grades and achievement test scores); student discipline and behavioral data and/or teacher, family, or student requests for assistance; and instructional and classroom and/or behavior management practices already in place. The team should identify actions to address the student's target behavior by developing recommendations for positive behavior supports in relevant school environments and/or identify appropriate Tier II interventions.

School level RTI2 teams should establish entry criteria (e.g., level of risk on a universal screening) for placement in specific Tier II behavioral interventions. In many cases, more precise assessment and information may be needed to identify the specific area(s) of academic deficit or behavioral needs (e.g., survey-level academic assessments, considerations, or brief assessments to identify the potential function(s) of problem behavior). As a reminder, any screening for mental health concerns requires written parental consent.

The team should ensure teachers and support staff (e.g., paraprofessionals, teaching assistants, bus drivers, and cafeteria workers) are provided training, support, and materials to implement recommendations or intervention procedures. The training may need to include the data collection procedure or a schedule for informing the team of the student's progress.

TIER II **SOME**

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are impacting the student's success in learning, including participation as a valuable member of the school learning environment. These interventions are usually provided for a small group and are not necessarily daily, although data may occur daily. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.



Tennessee RTI²-B Model

TIER I

ALL

The school climate and culture nurtures and supports the learning of each individual student. Behavior expectations are clearly articulated, modelled, and reinforced. Universal screening for internalizing and externalizing behaviors are used as well as a whole school fidelity measure, such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) to guide school decision making and planning.

TIER II

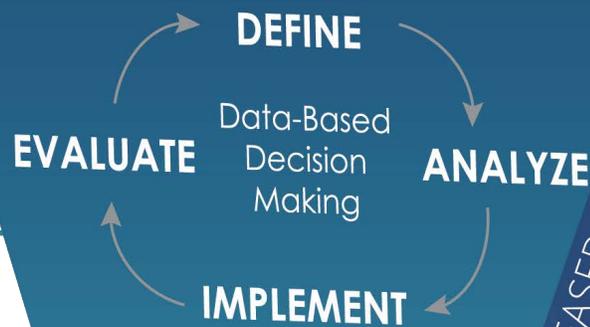
SOME

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are impacting the student's success in learning, including participation as a valuable member of the school learning environment. These interventions are usually provided for a small group and are not necessarily daily, although data may occur daily. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.

TIER III

FEW

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are significantly or chronically impacting the student's success in learning to a degree that Tier II intervention were not effective or sufficiently intensive. These interventions are usually provided on an individual basis and often occur daily including daily monitoring. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.



INCREASED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

4.2 Implementing Tier II Intervention

Tier II addresses the needs of students struggling with behavioral or social-emotional skills despite receiving strong Tier I supports including school climate, a comprehensive school counseling program, and effective classroom management. Tier II interventions are provided in addition to the Tier I supports in place for all students in the school. Interventions at Tier II are typically systematic, evidence-based interventions that target students' identified behavior or social /emotional areas of deficit (e.g., self-management, coping, and organization). These interventions should be efficient, easily accessible for students, provided as soon as possible upon identification that the student is at risk or struggling, and often times, implemented among small groups of students who exhibit similar behavior concerns. One goal of Tier II interventions is to address student needs and teach socially successful behaviors before inappropriate behaviors create major concerns and the need for more intensive intervention. In turn, this promotes a positive school climate where students are identified as needing additional support earlier and are taught self-monitoring and other socially successful behaviors necessary to succeed in school.

Tier II key features should include: (1) similar implementation across students; (2) continuous availability and quick access to the interventions; (3) consistent training on referral procedures and intervention implementation, when appropriate; (4) consistency with school expectations; (5) flexibility based on functional assessment; and (6) continuous progress monitoring (OSEP, 2005).

Both academic and behavioral RTI2 systems share a range of common outcomes including maximizing time for instruction, enhancing student-teacher relationships, fostering school connectedness, and improving academic and social competency for all students (Walker & Shinn, 2002).

Strategies or practices used in Tier II interventions usually include:

- a. Focus on additional instruction and practice
- b. Increased structure for academics and/or behavior

Some evidence-based practices used within Tier II are:

- token economy,
- social skills clubs,
- peer-based support or peer tutoring,
- check in/check out connection and feedback,
- increased adult or peer role model contact,
- increased modeling of set routines, and
- mentoring.

(Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2003)

Additional instruction may include re-teaching of critical skills (e.g., "double-dosing" a social behavior lesson) and providing ample opportunities for practice. Increasing the structure or explicitness provides students with high-probability opportunities for success (Fuchs, 2009). Tier II behavioral interventions may add additional structure to the school day or challenging routines. Tier II behavior interventions are in addition to core instruction and less intensive than Tier III interventions. Unlike the RTI² Framework, RTI²-B does not require a 30–45 minute dose of behavior instruction; rather, the interventions are additional, evidence-based practices that are selected and applied to individual students based on need.

4.3 Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is used to assess student's performance or responsiveness to intervention as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and intervention. When additional intervention is being provided in Tier II, the effectiveness of the intervention should be monitored to ensure that it is helping the student reach a goal. This is accomplished through frequent data collection. Progress monitoring tools should be sensitive to change. While the universal screening tool measures student internalizing and externalizing behaviors, progress monitoring must be conducted with measures that are specific to measuring the students identified behavior need and growth toward their goal.

Progress monitoring in Tier II may include:

- Intervention artifacts
- Observations
- Data sheets



4.4 Data-Based Decision Making

Teachers must have knowledge and set goals for each child. Expected growth can be determined by monitoring progress of the student toward the end goal. Teachers use the data from progress monitoring to make good instructional decisions.

Many intervention program materials provide examples and resources for ways to monitor progress of students based on the interventions being provided. Teams will meet to analyze data, measure the effectiveness of interventions, and check student progress toward goals. A plan will be in place for when students are and are not making adequate progress within Tier II. If students are not making adequate progress in Tier II, the intervention may need to be changed. Students should have at least four data points to make a data based decision. Only one or two variables should be changed at a time to measure effectiveness of the change. A change in intervention will be considered within each tier before moving to the next tier of intervention. Changes may include:

- increasing frequency of intervention sessions;
- changing interventions;
- changing intervention provider; and
- changing time of day intervention is delivered.

Students receiving Tier II interventions typically require interventions beyond what can be provided in Tier I alone. During this extended support in Tier II intervention, a student's progress should be monitored closely so that changes to the intervention can be made. The student's progress should guide the RTI²-B leadership team in making these changes to the intervention.

The district and school-wide RTI² leadership teams should consult with their district level RTI²-B coach or their TBSP provider to request support or training for conducting FBAs, developing behavior intervention plans, selecting and using behavioral progress monitoring tools, and establishing decision rules for Tier III.



Data collection is crucial for predicting problems that are not solely academic or behavioral in nature. Problems in one area may serve as an effective screener for problems in another. The student age or grade level may determine the degree to which particular data is considered. For example, in kindergarten, it is rare for students to receive a formal office discipline referral. Behavior is either addressed by the teacher, or the teacher escorts the student to discuss the problem with the principal to help facilitate the conversation with the student. Given the low rates of kindergarten ODRs teams should consider other sources of data proven to help predict behavioral problems such as kindergarten reading deficits. (McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Bolland, & Good, 2006; McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, 2009). However, in middle school and high school, it is more common for students to receive a formal office referral and rarely are escorted to the office by the teacher. For students older than kindergarten, ODR data may indicate whether the student has difficulty interacting with peers or teachers and which school settings should be targeted for additional support.

For more information, please refer to Data-Based Decision Making Table in Component 3.3

4.4 Professional Development for Tier II

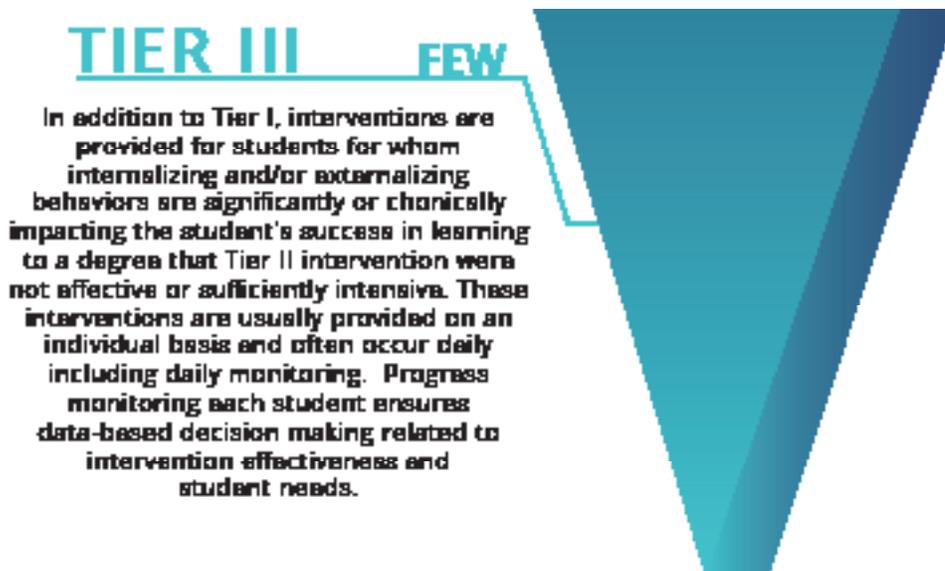
The success of Tier II interventions is dependent on the fidelity of implementation. A student with a behavior deficit will need support throughout the school day and various settings, therefore, the number of adults who will need appropriate training in Tier II behavior interventions is much larger than the number of adults who need training in Tier II academic interventions. School-wide professional development can assist in building capacity and understanding among all adults—educators, administrators, and support staff—so that they are prepared when a student is identified as requiring additional behavior support and intervention. At Tier II, the intervention is typically identified for a small group of students. When all the adults in the building are trained, each student will be supported throughout the entire school day in all environments.

Professional development opportunities for Tier II should focus on the following topics: identifying students for Tier II supports, monitoring progress, matching interventions to student needs, providing intervention-specific training, and implementing fidelity measures.

4.4.1 Tennessee Behavior Support Projects

The TBSP begins training with the development of strong, evidence-based Tier I procedures. Once schools, who receive professional development and technical assistance from TBSP have developed a strong Tier I plan and are implementing it with fidelity, they will receive training and support in developing systematic Tier II structure, identifying students who need Tier II behavioral intervention, and training on evidence-based Tier II interventions for behavior.

Component 5: Tier III Procedures



5.1 Overview of Tier III

Tier III interventions address the needs of the 3–5 percent of students who either:

- received Tier II interventions with fidelity but continue to engage in levels of challenging behavior that interfere with their academic and social progress in school;
- have been identified through a screening to need individualized, intensive interventions;
- have experienced trauma recently or still significantly impacted by the trauma; or
- engage in extremely aggressive or dangerous behaviors to self and/or others at a level of intensity above that of Tier II.

The defining features of Tier III interventions include (a) a greater level of intensity relative to Tiers I and II and (b) specifically designed intervention to address the function or the behavior and simultaneously teach a replacement behavior.

Because all students impact school climate, Tier III interventions promote positive school climates by ensuring that the students with the greatest support needs receive a level of support that allows them to thrive in school. Tier III interventions should positively impact school climate by maximizing the extent to which these students participate academically and socially in school. Interventions should focus on teaching and strengthening pro-social behaviors that will benefit the student long term, while simultaneously decreasing challenging behaviors in the short term. A positive problem-solving approach assumes that challenging behavior is an indication of a mismatch between the needs of an individual student and the conditions of their educational environment (Dunlap, Harrower, & Fox, 2005).

“That is rather than assuming the problem lies within the *student*, modifications are made to the *environment* to increase the likelihood of appropriate behaviors.”

Tennessee RTI²-B Model

TIER I

ALL

The school climate and culture nurtures and supports the learning of each individual student. Behavior expectations are clearly articulated, modelled, and reinforced. Universal screening for internalizing and externalizing behaviors are used as well as a whole school fidelity measure, such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) to guide school decision making and planning.

TIER II

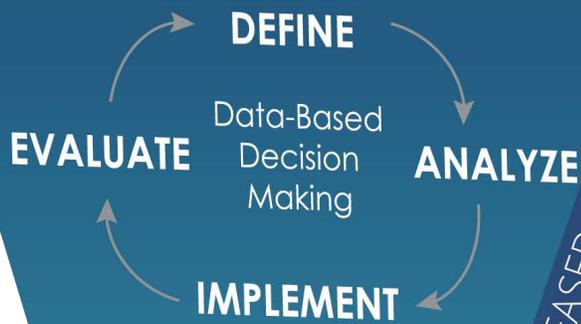
SOME

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are impacting the student's success in learning, including participation as a valuable member of the school learning environment. These interventions are usually provided for a small group and are not necessarily daily, although data may occur daily. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.

TIER III

FEW

In addition to Tier I, interventions are provided for students for whom internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors are significantly or chronically impacting the student's success in learning to a degree that Tier II intervention were not effective or sufficiently intensive. These interventions are usually provided on an individual basis and often occur daily including daily monitoring. Progress monitoring each student ensures data-based decision making related to intervention effectiveness and student needs.



INCREASED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

5.2 Implementing Tier III Interventions

Tier III Interventions are individualized to specifically address the needs of the individual student. The progress monitoring at Tier III is often more frequent with multiple data points taken weekly, sometimes even daily, in order to identify gradual changes in behavior (both inappropriate and appropriate behavior). The interventions are customized to address externalized behaviors (e.g., physical or verbal aggression, self-injury, or disruption) and/or internalized behaviors (e.g., feelings of anxiety, a depressive mood, or being withdrawn) as well as other behaviors identified by the team. In some cases, a wrap-around model of services, both internal and external to the school, may be the best approach.

For a student needing Tier III support, school staff members might need to scaffold the behavior intervention plan in order to gradually bring the student to the desired behavior rather than an immediate jump from their current behavior to the desired behavior.

For instance,

consider a student who runs out of the school building through the nearest door when presented difficult or non-preferred tasks. The Tier III intervention may be a smaller step towards the goal of remaining within class. The student's support team may instead work on teaching the student to identify when they are becoming stressed through direct instruction, model signaling to the teacher, and then, practice escaping while remaining within the building by running to a designated "safe" location. While running to the "safe" location is still not commensurate with their peers, it is a step towards responding to the need to escape in a manner that is safe; in this case, the student no longer running into oncoming traffic. Continued prompting and acknowledgement of the student selecting the "safe" location will support the student in becoming independent in that behavior. The team will continue to scaffold the intervention and behavioral expectations, monitoring for continued progress until the student is successful with the desired behavior, in this example, staying with the classroom regardless of the task through the use of coping strategies.

The RTI2 leadership team will identify interventions and/or supports aligned to the student's individual needs. Schools have already incorporated many different initiatives, systems, and programs within schools. Here are a few options currently within select Tennessee schools:

- Modified day or schedule
- Option to work within a separate setting
- Individual counseling
- Discipline contracts
- Functional behavior assessments (FBA)** and behavior improvement plans (BIP)

**In some cases, an FBA is legally mandated and schools need to be knowledgeable of those regulations. However, even if the situation does not mandate an FBA, the team may choose to complete one. An FBA is a powerful way to collect and analyze data in the development and selection of intervention and/or a BIP and can be completed by school personnel.

At this level, a student's behavior is likely adversely impacting their educational performance. Interventions at this level address multiple issues that have an impact on student success. For students who "cannot" perform an academic remediation or behavioral skill due to a deficit, specific academic remediation or teaching of replacement behaviors (or in combination) may be required. A functional behavior assessment is a powerful tool to assist the team in defining the target and replacement behaviors, determining the function of the behavior or what the student gains from the inappropriate behavior, and appropriate intervention(s). Ongoing data collection is critical for the development of evidenced based interventions through a behavior intervention plan. Behavior assessments can include record reviews, interviews, observations, and checklists designed to be synthesized into a comprehensive plan regarding the student's target behaviors (Roberts, Marshall, Nelson, & Albers, 2001).

Evidence-based interventions to support desired behaviors address four major components:

- setting event supports,
- antecedent interventions,
- teaching new behaviors, and
- consequence strategies.

The use of evidence-based practices to support students in reducing challenging behaviors and improving his/her engagement in academic and social life can ultimately remove the barriers to academic success.



5.3 Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is used to assess student's performance or responsiveness to intervention as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and intervention. When additional intervention is being provided in Tier III, the effectiveness of the intervention should be monitored to ensure that it is helping the student reach a goal. This is accomplished through frequent data collection. Progress monitoring tools should be sensitive to change. While the universal screening tool measures student internalizing and externalizing behaviors, progress monitoring must be conducted with measures that are specific to measuring the students identified behavior need and growth toward their goal.

Progress monitoring in Tier III may include:

- Intervention artifacts
- Observations
- Data sheets
- Data from the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

5.4 Data-Based Decision Making Procedures

Teachers must have knowledge and set goals for each child. Expected growth can be determined by monitoring progress of the student toward the end goal. Teachers use the data from progress monitoring to make good instructional decisions.

Many intervention program materials provide examples and resources for ways to monitor progress of students based on the interventions being provided. RT12 leadership teams will meet to analyze data, measure the effectiveness of interventions, and check student progress toward goals. A plan will be in place for when students are and are not making adequate progress within Tier III. If students are not making adequate progress in Tier III, the intervention may need to be changed. Students should have at least four data points to make a data based decision. Only one or two variables should be changed at a time to measure effectiveness of the change. A change in intervention will be considered within each tier before moving to the next tier of intervention.

Changes may include:

- increasing frequency of intervention sessions;
- changing interventions;
- changing intervention provider; and
- changing time of day intervention is delivered.

Students receiving tier III interventions typically demonstrate a higher need and therefore may require Tier III intervention for a longer period of time before student growth meets expectations.

During this extended support in Tier III intervention, a student's progress should be monitored closely so that changes to the intervention can be made. The student's progress should guide the data team in making these changes to the intervention. The purpose of immediately placing a student in Tier III intervention is to increase the intensity of the intervention, not to shorten the duration of the intervention period.

The district and school-wide RTI2 leadership team should consult with their district level RTI2-B coach or their TBSP provider to request support or training for conducting FBAs, developing behavioral intervention plans, selecting and using behavioral progress monitoring tools, and establishing decision rules for Tier III.

For more information, please refer to Data-Based Decision Making Table in Component 3.3

5.5 Professional Development Provided for Tier III Interventions

Professional development opportunities for Tier III should focus on the following topics: functional behavior assessments, behavior intervention plans, intensive interventions, progress monitoring, fidelity measures for Tier III supports, and intervention-specific trainings.

5.6.1 Tennessee Behavior Supports Project

Tier III often involves functional behavior assessments (FBAs) as well as the development and implementation of behavior intervention Plans. TBSPs can provide guidance and support to schools related to FBAs and behavior intervention plans.

5.5 Consideration for Special Education

Through assessment, intervention, progress monitoring, data review, and continuing refinement of the intervention, many students will become increasingly independent within the school and there will be a reduction in the undesired behavior and increase in the desired behavior. However, for a very few, even Tier III supports are not sufficient. For these students, special education referral should be considered. The referral process as well as all subsequent processes and procedures within special education are outlined within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Tennessee Special Education Framework.

Component 6: Special Education Procedures

6.1 Overview of Special Education Procedures

Special education is considered the most intensive intervention designed for students with a variety of disabilities. Students with special needs are likely to benefit from additional services, such as: different approaches to teaching, the use of technology, a specifically adapted teaching area, or deficit-based intervention. Integrating behavior strategies and interventions should be proactive and include a range of resources.

RTI2-B is a problem-solving system for providing all students with the instruction, intervention, and supports they need. Students receiving special education services may also receive Tier II or Tier III intervention.

For example,



suppose a student meets eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability in reading. For this student, special education intervention is provided daily. Additionally, the student has difficulty with peer interactions and is aggressive toward peers. To provide intervention in peer interactions, the student attends a Tier II social skills intervention two times a week and completes a daily check in/check out form. Coordination and communication between all staff supporting the student will increase the student benefit and success from all the interventions provided.

For students who are eligible for special education due to the impact of a disability in which behavior is an associated area of deficit, Tier II and Tier III are most likely not sufficiently intense. As student learns and uses the skills previously identified, he/she may benefit from Tier II or Tier III intervention in a less restrictive setting. The IEP team will need to determine the least restrictive environment based on the student's current level of performance and any additional data the team may need to consider.

Component 7: Crisis Management Team

7.1 School-wide Crisis Management

Schools should consider a crisis management plan as part of a comprehensive school safety plan. The school counselor should assist in the development of the crisis management plan as well as implementation, training, and support to adults and students. The most important considerations are student and staff health, safety, and welfare. The emphasis should be placed on prevention factors, such as but not limited to: scheduling, programming, school culture, discipline policies, and practicing emergency preparation drills such as fire evacuation. A crisis management plan may be necessary to deal with the onset of extreme circumstances for students and staff to provide a step-by-step, problem-solving approach for managing individual situations when dangerous behaviors occur. Strategies should prevent, de-escalate, and help manage severe behaviors that present a risk of injury to self, other students, or staff.

Reasons for crisis management may include, but are not limited to:

- student is seriously ill (e.g., cancer, cystic fibrosis),
- death of a student or staff member,
- suicidal student,
- student with intent to harm self and/or others,
- external school threat (e.g., shooting at neighborhood business, kidnapping), or
- military deployment of many parents,
- natural disasters,
- incarceration of a family member.

A school-wide crisis management team should use the PREPARE program or develop a plan outlining procedures related to:

- communication with parents and families,
- communication with the community/stakeholders,
- support of school personnel,
- support of students,
- referral procedures to outside agencies of support and expertise, and
- follow up with individuals.

7.2 Students in Crisis

Additionally, schools should have staff members that are trained in de-escalation procedures and crisis prevention for students who become unsafe to themselves or others.

A crisis management system should be clearly outlined including the roles and responsibilities of all members of the team. For schools that receive training regarding restraint from a vendor, many of these procedures are included within the training. In most cases, staff member must follow procedures recommended by the vendor in order to maintain certification and/or be protected in the case of a legal proceeding. For schools that do not use a vendor for training or if the training is focused only on the restraint techniques, care should be taken to ensure that staff members use a proactive problem-solving approach to avoid escalation and support the student during de-escalation.

Behavior at the crisis level is traumatic for all involved, including staff members and students. Often a student will become anxious once asked to return the classroom. The crisis plan should outline a process that includes rapport repair between the staff member(s), the student, and the student's peers. Additionally, immediately following a crisis, an individual may be at high risk or escalating quickly to high risk due to a higher emotional state or "raw" emotional state, so de-escalation may need to occur for an extended period of time.

Finally, any plan for a student in crisis should include a communication plan between the school and the student's parents.



Glossary

Attendance: Positive school climate helps students be motivated to come to school and participate in class. Chronic absenteeism has a negative effect on student academic success. Schools should adopt a multi-tiered, problem-solving system of supports for attendance, with some supports available to all, others to a more targeted group, and some individualized interventions for the students who need the most support. Similarly, schools should review attendance data frequently to ensure that efforts are successful and all students are being supported.

Attendance Works (January 2014).

Bullying Prevention: A positive school climate allows students to feel safe, secure, and free from bullying. Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, harassment, threats, or intimidation when one person has greater status or power than the other. A growing number of bullying prevention programs are available to schools, and these programs can be integrated within a multi-tiered framework to improve school climate. In addition to their focus on prevention, addressing bullying behavior can be included among the RTI2-B practices to support student behavior. Prevention efforts of these programs include, but are not limited to, teaching specific skills and strategies to all students, removing triggers of bullying behavior, acknowledging desired behavior, examining discipline data to look for trends, individualizing support based on responsiveness, and building a positive and predictable school climate.

Character Education: Character education is a learning process that enables students and adults in a school community to understand, care about, and act on core values. RTI2-B and character education both strive to enhance school climate. As an effort to improve the educational experience of students, both initiatives focus on meeting students' needs by developing autonomy, a sense of belonging, and competency (Schwartz 2009). Character education curricula can be incorporated as part of the Tier 1 instructional within a school.

Comprehensive School Counseling Program: Driven by student data and based on standards in academic, postsecondary and career, and personal/social development, comprehensive school counseling programs promote and enhance the learning of all students. Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, administrator, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders to create an environment that promotes students achievement. The framework of a comprehensive school counseling program consists of four components: foundations, management, delivery, and accountability. School counselors provide services to students, parents, school staff and the community through the school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning and responsive services. Support services are provided on behalf of students as a result of the school counselor's interaction with others including referrals for additional assistance, consultation, and collaboration with stakeholders. School counselors use data to show the impact of the school counseling program on student achievement, attendance, and behavior, and analyze school counseling program assessments to guide future action and improve future results for all students.

Data-Based Decision Making: Data-based decision making is the process of using appropriate data collected to inform and drive each instructional decision.

Fidelity: Fidelity is the extent to which the prescribed instruction or intervention plan is executed. Fidelity includes addressing the deficit area, using the type of intervention prescribed, maintaining an appropriate group size, length of session, following intervention procedures, etc.

Fidelity Monitoring: Fidelity monitoring is the systematic monitoring by a responsible member of the school-wide RTI2 leadership team to determine the extent to which the delivery of instruction or an intervention adheres to the protocols or program models originally developed. Fidelity monitoring has increased significance for evaluation and treatment effectiveness. The fidelity of implementation per intervention and instruction should be assessed throughout the process as per the guidelines in the manual.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Function-based Behavioral Intervention: A functional behavioral assessment includes procedures for gathering information about a student's behavior in order to develop a hypothesis about the function (i.e., purpose) of the student's problem behavior. FBA procedures may include: direct observation in the setting where the problem behavior typically occurs; interviews with student, family, teachers; rating scales; review of academic, medical, mental health, or other records. FBAs are typically conducted by individual student support teams and should include relevant school staff, representatives from appropriate internal or external support services, and family/student. The resulting hypothesis about the function of the problem behavior should be used to develop an individualized behavior intervention plan that is based on the function of the student's problem behavior. Although FBAs are required in the case of suspension and/or expulsions of more than 10 days, the FBA is not a disciplinary tool. Rather is a systematic way to collect, analyze, and use data.

Implementation Integrity: Implementation integrity is the extent to which core instruction and intervention materials and procedures are used as intended by the author/publisher or intervention developer. Implementation integrity also includes the prescribed amount of time and frequency required for the treatment to yield its best results.

RTI2-B internal coach: An individual within the school who leads the RTI2 implementation, monitors fidelity, ensures implementation, and provides expertise in RTI2-B.

Mental health: a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

"Model of Demonstration" schools and/or districts will be identified using criteria developed by the state leadership team as schools that implement the principles of RTI-B with a high level of fidelity. Model of Demonstration schools or districts will be considered for mentorship of neighboring schools and districts who are working towards implementation.

Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs): One source of student discipline data that RTI2 leadership teams and school support teams can use to evaluate the overall effectiveness of RTI2-Behavior, to drive continuous improvement, to screen for behavior problems, and/or to monitor students' behavioral progress. To collect and use ODR data, school support teams should have clear definitions of problem behaviors and clear procedures for problem behaviors which should be office-managed (e.g., major problem behaviors) and which should be classroom-managed (e.g., minor problem behaviors). School teams should collect and analyze students' ODRs by problem behavior, location in which they occur, and the time of day they occur.

Progress Monitoring: Progress monitoring is used to assess students' academic or behavioral performance, to quantify students' rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction and intervention, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and intervention. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

RTI2 Leadership Team: Each district will have a RTI2 leadership team to support the implementation of RTI2. This team will review district-wide data related to student outcomes (academic and behavioral) and to evaluate the fidelity of implementation of RTI2 across the district. A district level RTI2-Behavior coach will be available to provide ongoing support and consultation to school-wide RTI2 leadership teams.

RTI2-B TBSP Provider: The Tennessee Behavior Supports Project will provide technical assistance (i.e., training, consultation, and/or external coaching) to school and district teams to implement RTI2-Behavior. There are three projects (from the University of Memphis, Lambuth, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Tennessee) assigned to provide technical assistance to districts and schools in west, middle, and east Tennessee, respectively.

Screening: Screening may include a quick checklist, survey, or probe used to provide an initial general indicator of levels of academic performance or behavioral risk. Screenings may also include diagnostic assessments to gain more information about a student's academic or behavioral strengths and/or areas of concern.

Social and Emotional Learning: Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process of acquiring the skills to understand and manage emotions, develop care and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations effectively. The emphasis on coordinated, preventative instructional programming for all students aligns with RTI2-B, and both initiatives focus on social and emotional skill development and the belief that students learn best in a safe and predictable school climate.
(TDOE; SEL Teacher Toolkit, 2015)

State-wide RTI2-B Leadership Team: The state-wide leadership team for RTI2-B consists of state representatives from the Tennessee Department of Education. The state-wide technical assistance team consists of three regional support contracts known as the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP): University of Memphis-Lambuth, Vanderbilt University, and University of Tennessee-Knoxville. The state-wide leadership team has allocated time and resources through a five-year training grant (2015-2020) to assist in scaling up RTI2-B efforts throughout the state.

The Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP): The Tennessee Behavior Supports Project will provide technical assistance (i.e., training, consultation, and/or external coaching) to school and district teams to implement RTI2-Behavior. There are three projects (from the University of Memphis, Lambuth, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Tennessee) assigned to provide technical assistance to school districts in west, middle, and east Tennessee, respectively.

Universal Screening/Screeners: Universal screening helps to identify which students are performing at or above the level considered necessary for achieving long-term success (general outcome measures) and helps to identify students who are at risk for academic or behavioral difficulties. Universal screening data can also serve as a benchmark for measuring the improvement of a group, class, grade, school or district (e.g., a reduction in the percentage of students identified to be at risk for academic and/or behavioral difficulties as an indicator of improvement for the group, class, grade, school, or district).

Wraparound Services: are individualized community-based services that focus on the strengths and needs of the child and family. Wraparound services are developed through a team-planning process, where a team of individuals who are relevant to the well-being of the child (such as family members, service providers, teachers, and representatives from any involved agency) collaboratively develop and implement an individualized plan of care, known as a wraparound plan.

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