Response to Instruction Intervention (RTI²)

Karen Jensen and Theresa Nicholls

Background

- Lower performing students were **not** making enough progress to access grade-level expectations

- A large contingent of struggling students were being identified with a specific learning disability (SLD) for reasons that were as likely to be related to unmet instructional needs as they were to any definite disability

- Poor, minority, and male students were **over-represented** in the special education population

Adoption of RTI²

- In July 2014, the Tennessee State Board of Education adopted RTI²

- This move to a new model for SLD identification required schools to show evidence that students had received a series of increasingly intensive, targeted interventions based on individual needs before becoming eligible for special education

- More broadly, RTI² aimed to institutionalize a powerful theory of student progress. If schools were regularly screening all students for skill gaps and if student remediation could be increasingly personalized toward individual needs, core instruction could be more effective and would help keep students from slipping through the cracks

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Guiding Principles for the RTI² Framework

- Leadership

- Culture of collaboration

- Prevention and early intervention

# Tennessee's RTI² Model

TIER I ALL

All students receive research-based, high-quality, general education instruction. In general, 80-85 percent of students will have their needs met by Tier I instruction.

TIER II SOME

In addition to Tier I, extra help is provided to students who have been identified as "at risk" in basic math and reading skills. In general, 10-15 percent of student will receive Tier II interventions.

TIER III FEW

In addition to Tier I, extra help is provided to students who have not made significant progress in Tier II or who are significantly below grade level in basic math and reading skills. Tier III interventions are more explicit and more intensive than Tier II interventions.

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

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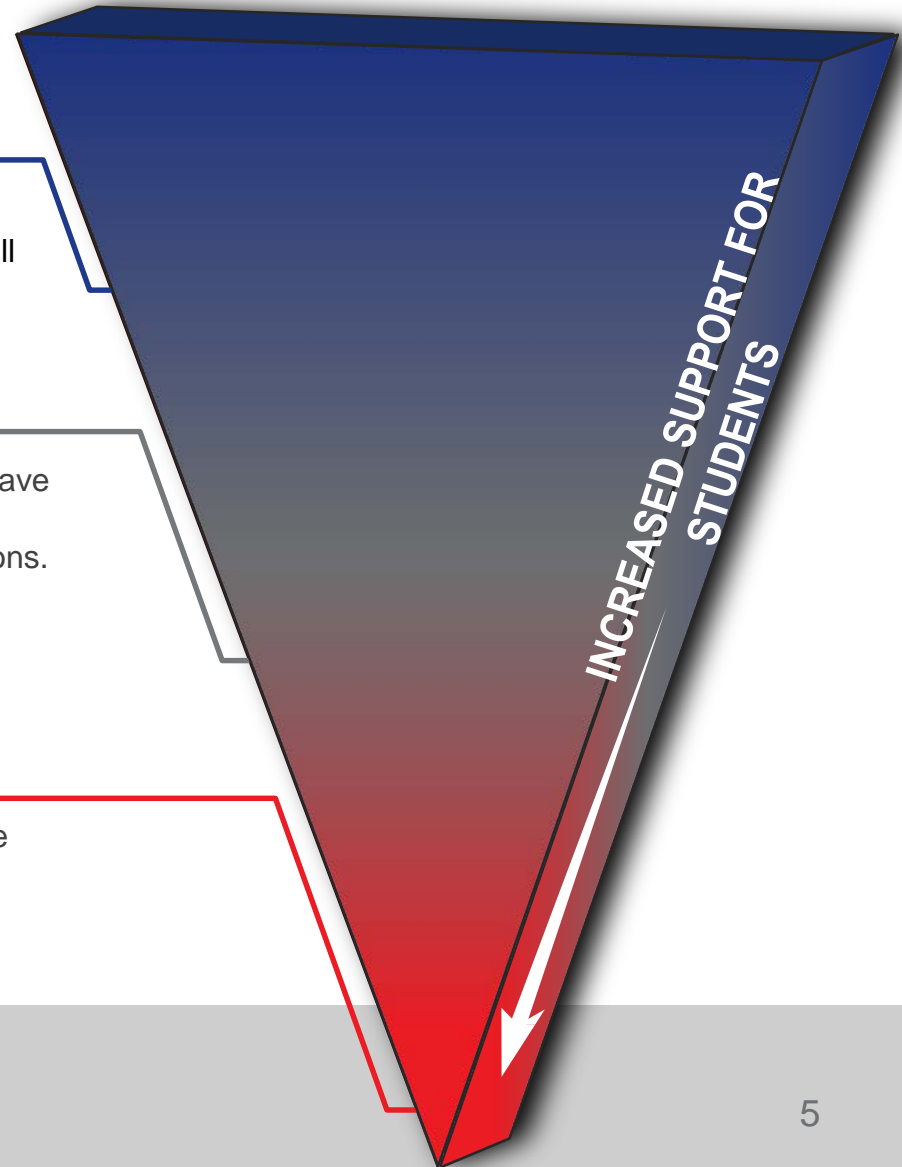
Problem Solving Process

Where are students performing compared to their peers?
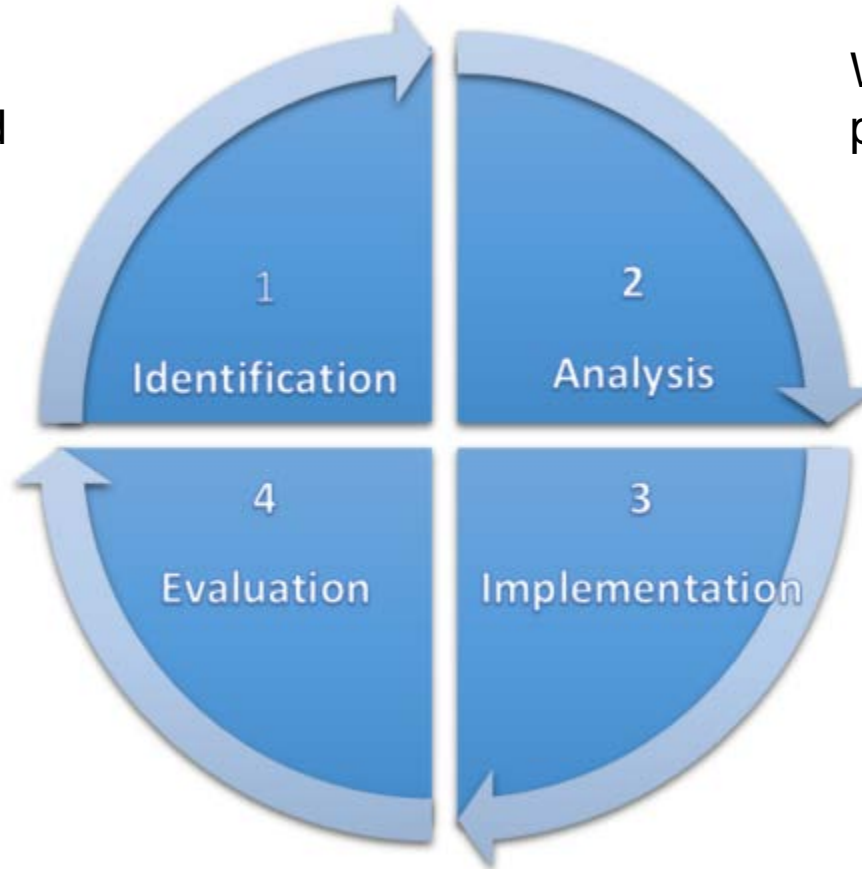
What is causing the problem?
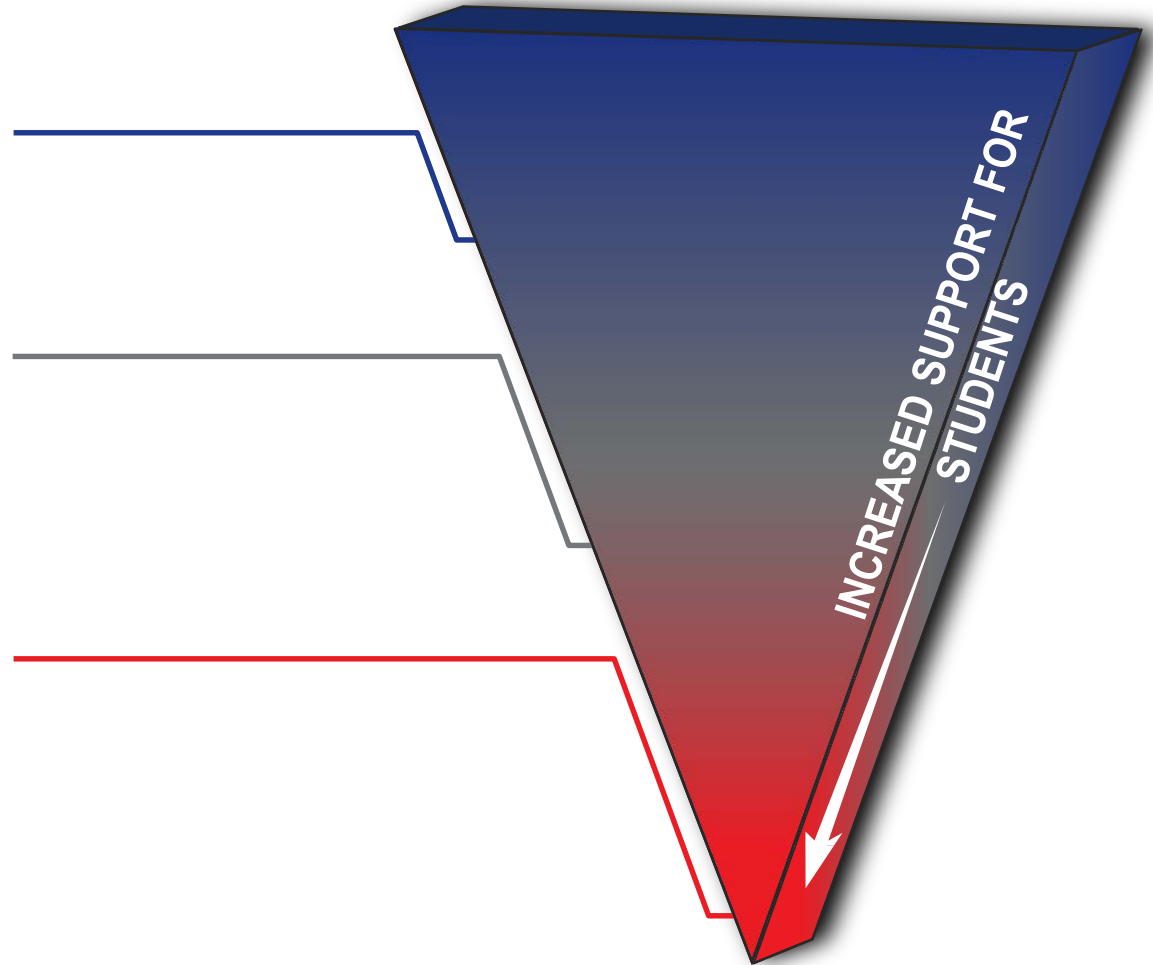

How are students responding?

What do students need?

Assessment

Universal Screening
Formative and Summative
Assessment

Diagnostic Assessment
Progress Monitoring

Diagnostic Assessment
Progress Monitoring

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Assessment

Requirements	Customization
Universal screening process 3x/year Grade K-6 1x/year Grade 7-12	• Screening measures used
Progress monitoring Students in Tier II or III intervention, every other week	• Frequency greater than every other week • Progress monitoring measures • Who conducts progress monitoring
Diagnostic Assessment Students in Tier II or III intervention	• Diagnostic assessment measures • Who administers diagnostic assessment • Training

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Data-based Decision Making

3x/year around benchmark testing

Every 4.5 weeks for students receiving Tier II intervention

Every 4.5 weeks for students receiving Tier III intervention

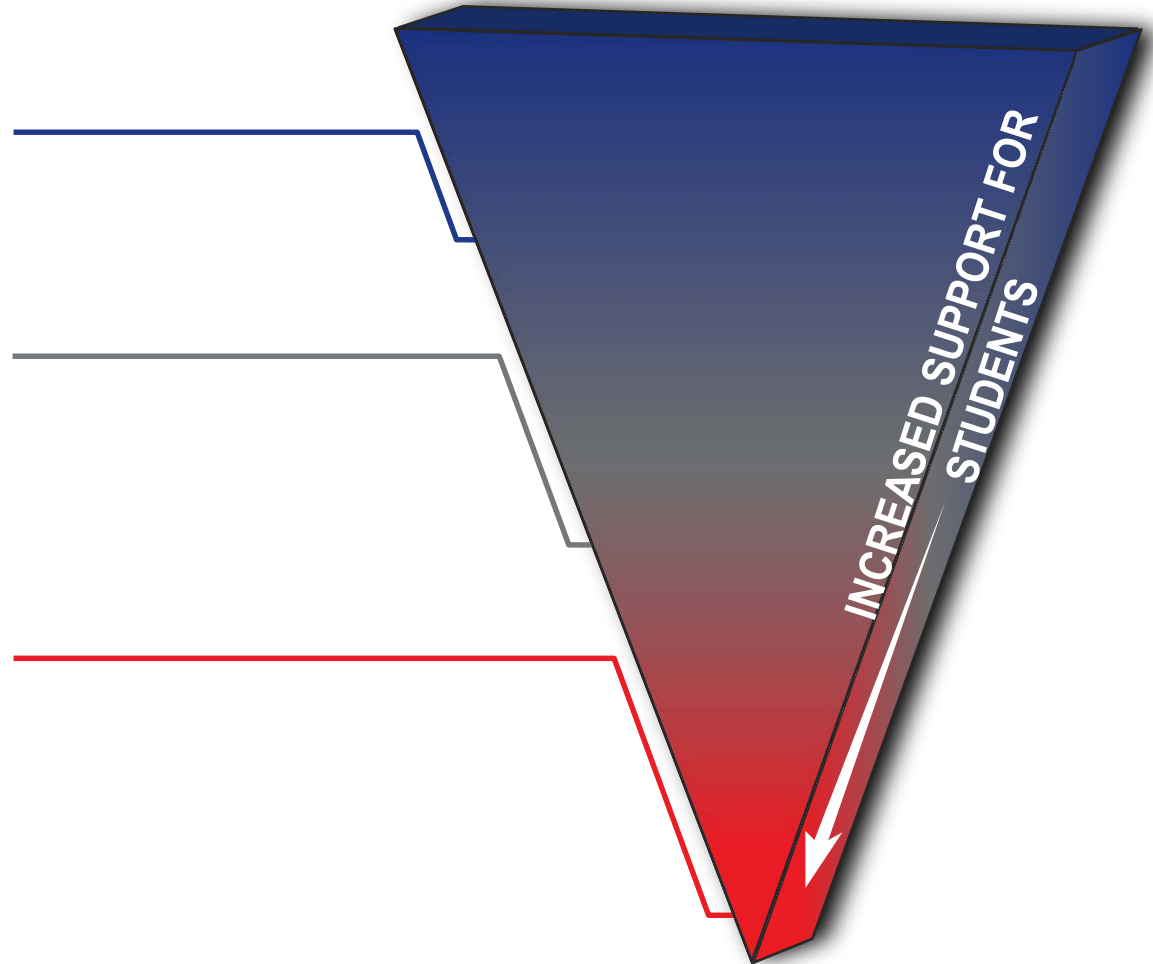INCREASED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

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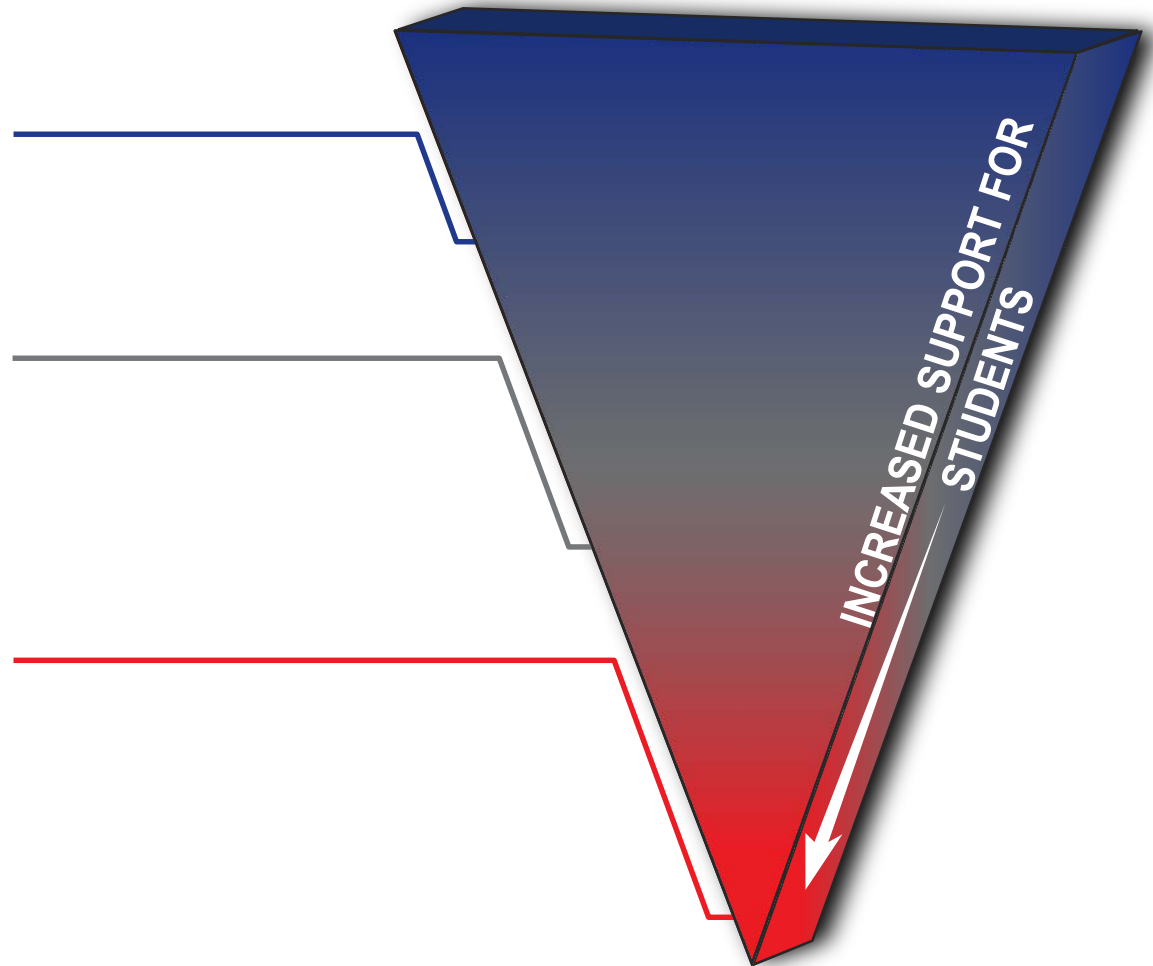
Tiered Instruction and Intervention

Effective, standards-based core instruction

Evidence-based interventions targeted to skill deficit

Evidence-based interventions targeted to skill deficit

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Instruction and Intervention

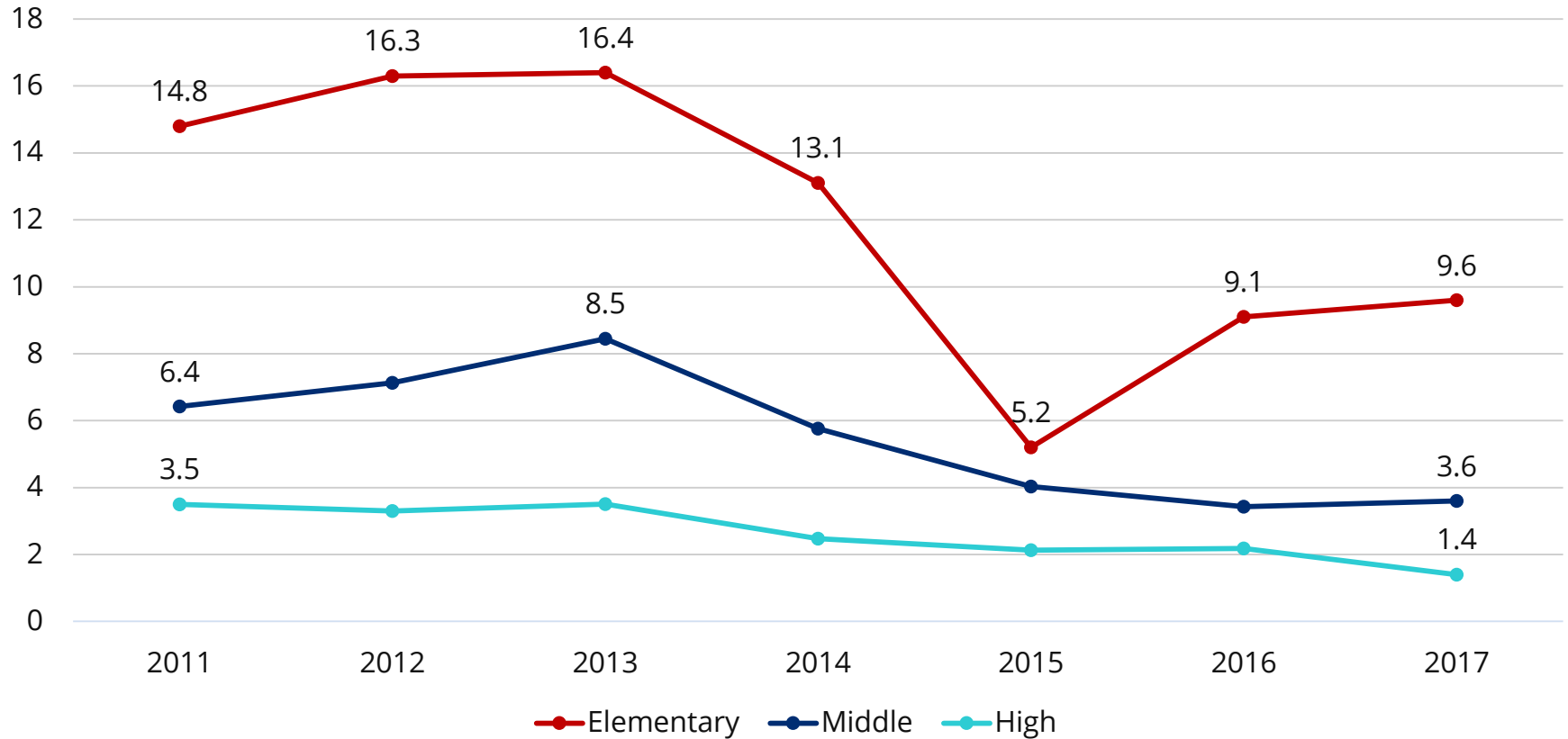| Requirements	Customization
All students have access to Tier I instruction	• Schedule for instruction and intervention
Tier II and III interventions taught by highly trained professionals	• Staffing decisions
Small group size for Tier II and III intervention	• Intervention materials
Duration of Tier II and III interventions	• Professional learning around use of Tier II and III interventions

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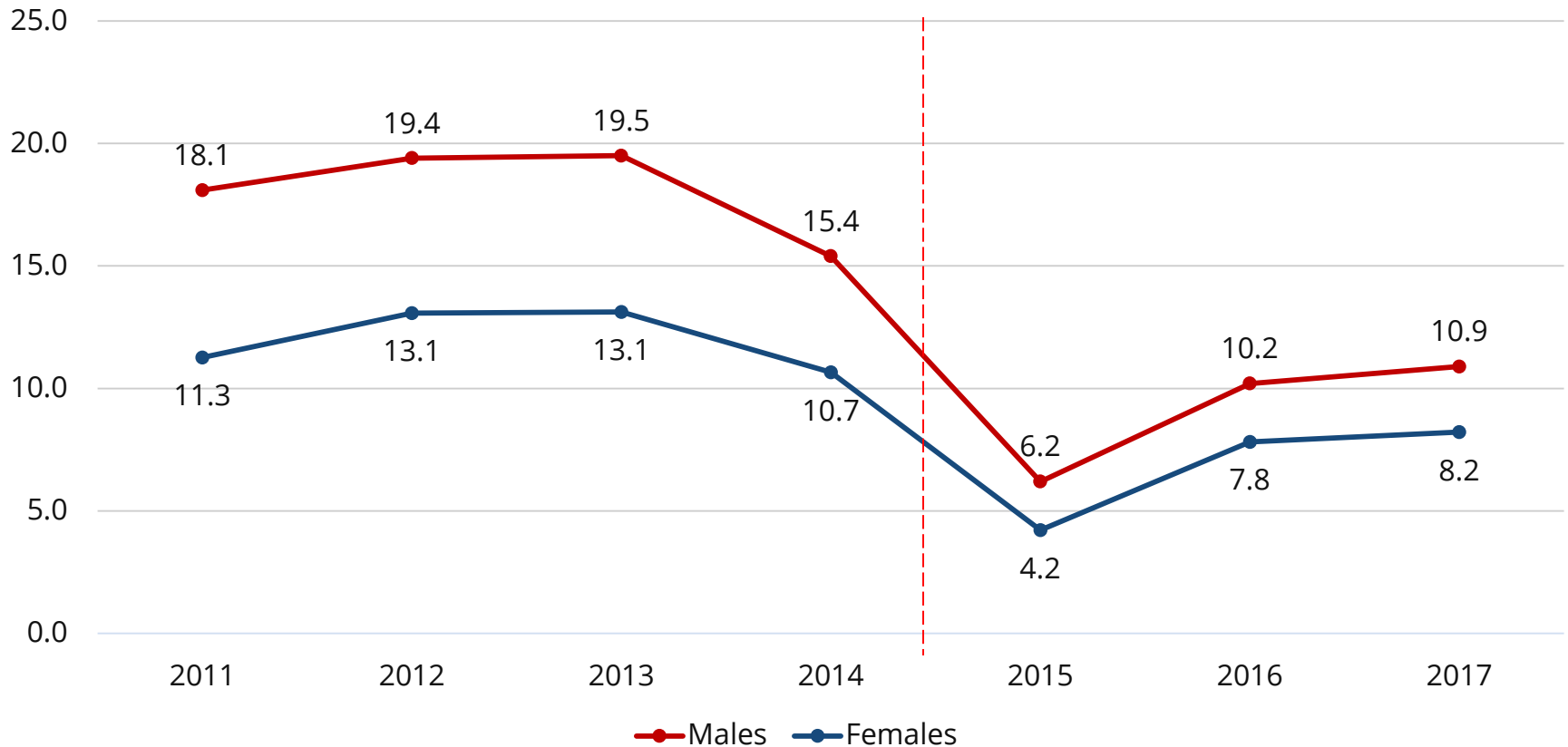
Has RTI² made an impact over the past three years?

Identifications of specific learning disabilities (SLDs) has dropped by over one third in elementary

New SLD identifications per 1000 students
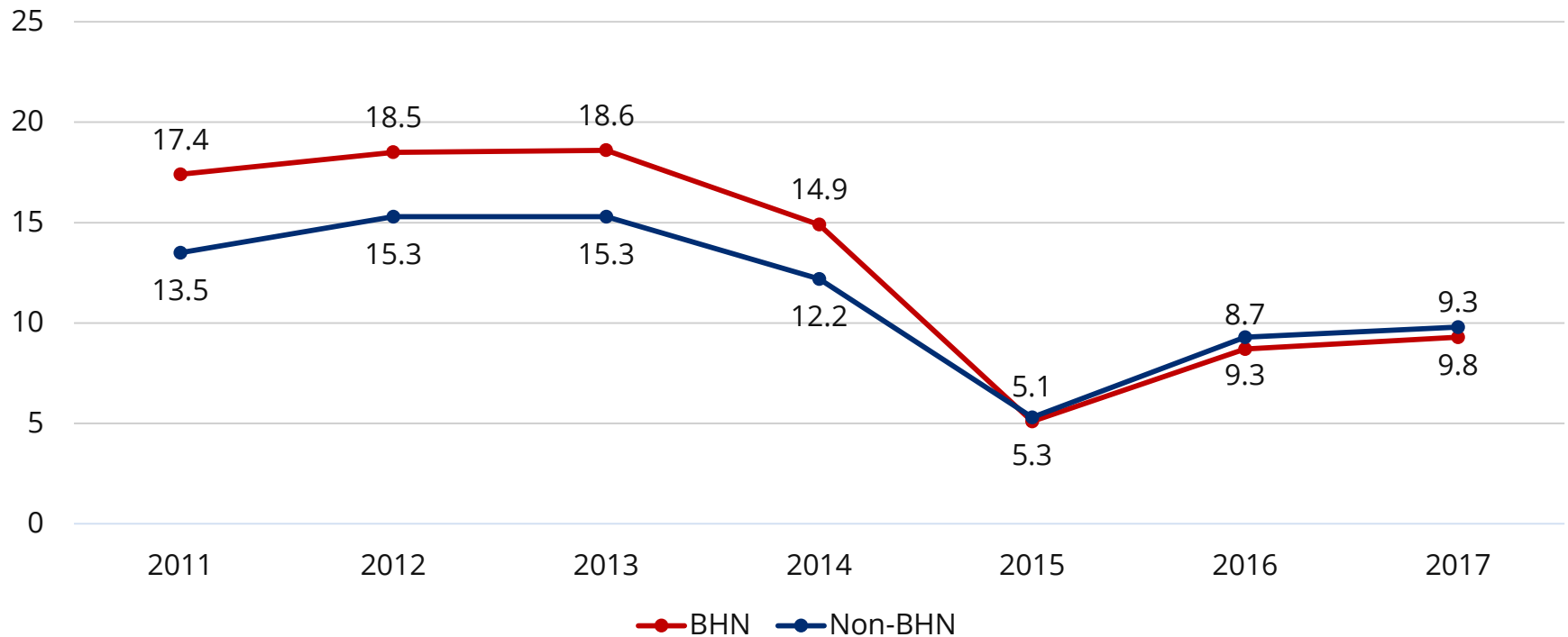

Elementary: 14.8 (2011), 16.3 (2012), 16.4 (2013), 13.1 (2014), 5.2 (2015), 9.1 (2016), 9.6 (2017)

Middle: 6.4 (2011), 8.5 (2013), 3.6 (2017)

High: 3.5 (2011), 1.4 (2017)

Legend: ━●━ Elementary ━●━ Middle ━●━ High

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Gaps in SLD identification between males and females in elementary narrowed significantly

SLD identifications per 1000 males/females

|	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Males	18.1	19.4	19.5	15.4	6.2	10.2	10.9
Females	11.3	13.1	13.1	10.7	4.2	7.8	8.2

Males   Females

Gaps in SLD identification between racial subgroups in elementary disappeared

SLD identifications per 1000 BHN/Non-BHN

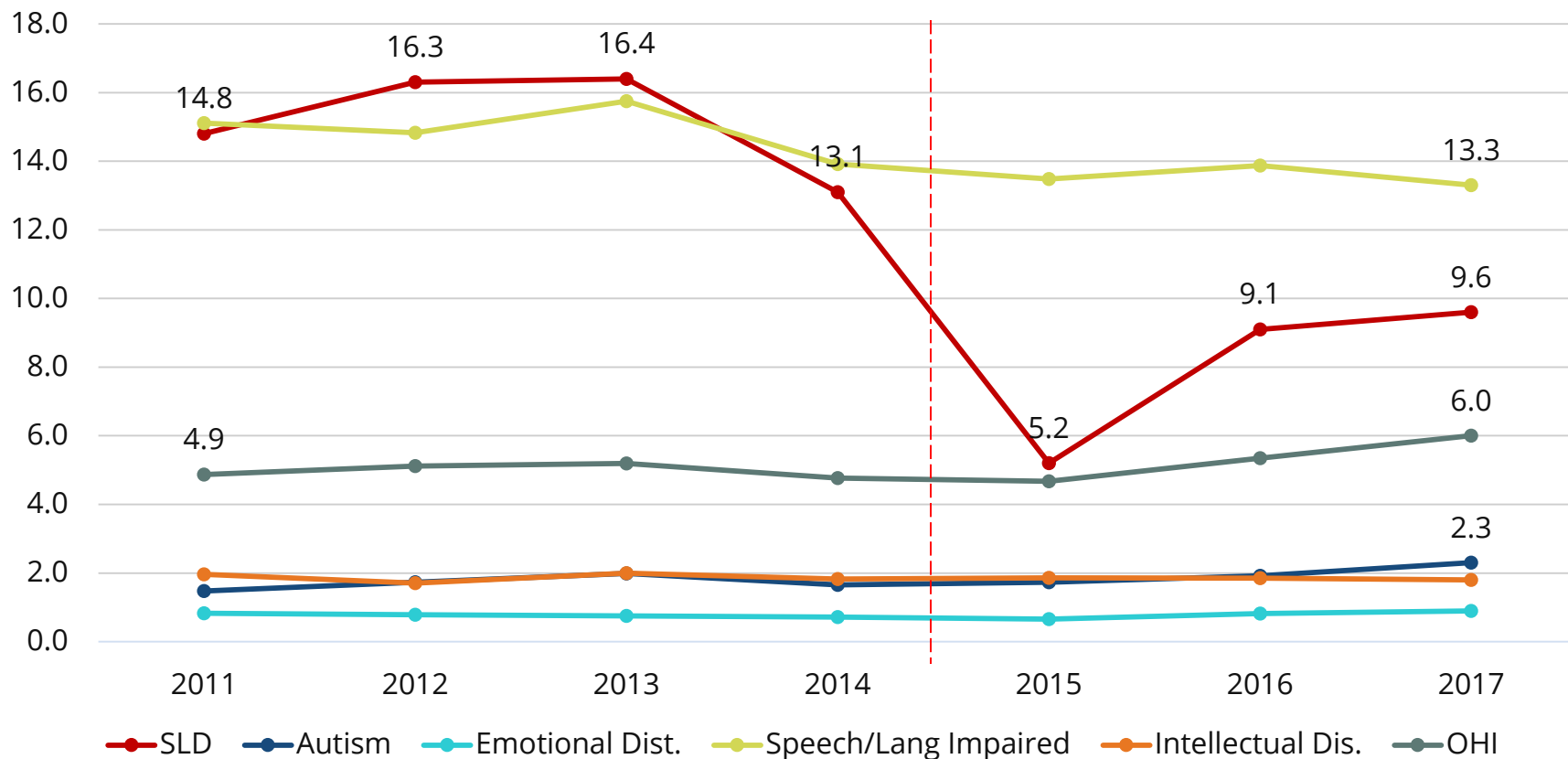|	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
BHN	17.4	18.5	18.6	14.9	5.1	9.3	9.8
Non-BHN	13.5	15.3	15.3	12.2	5.3	8.7	9.3

The average age of identification for SLD has not shifted since the policy change

Average age at SLD identification
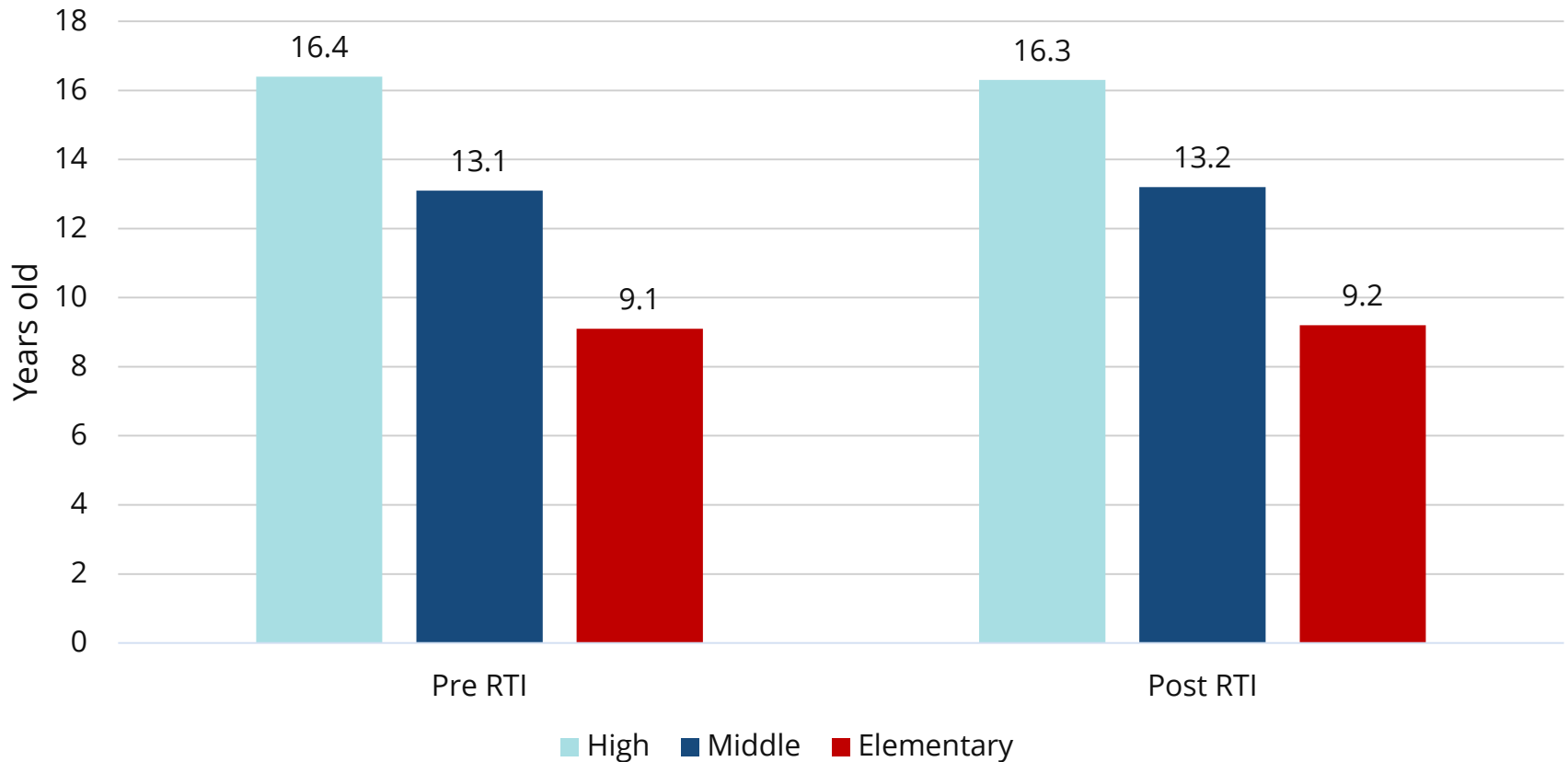
New SPED identifications per 1000 students

SLD · Autism · Emotional Dist. · Speech/Lang Impaired · Intellectual Dis. · OHI

Tracking Academic Outcomes

- Some districts report **decreases** in students performing below the 25th percentile on universal screener data.

- Some districts also report a **decrease** in the percentage of students requiring Tier II and III interventions.

- However, we also see that some students are staying in tiered interventions for **lengthy periods of time** and some who exit interventions do not maintain their skills later, requiring **further intervention.**

Challenges of RTI² Implementation

Challenges

- RTI^2 is difficult to integrate into already complex school structures.

- Staffing to support implementation can be difficult.

- Department guidance and support has felt restrictive to some while others have felt they needed more.

- Implementing RTI^2 at the high school level poses a unique set of challenges.

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Planning for the Future of RTI²

Looking Forward

- Examine current guidelines to determine how they could improve implementation.

- Enhance resources and support for RTI^2 implementation to increase best practices.

- Provide differentiated support for high schools.

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Listening Tour

Listening Tour

Town Halls

- Educators and community members across the state will be able to provide feedback around RTI[2].

High School Focus Groups

- Specific high schools around the state were chosen to conduct student and staff focus groups.

Contact Information

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