

Tennessee Response to Instruction & Intervention Framework

The role of the public education system is to prepare ALL students for success after high school. The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) believes that the framework surrounding positive outcomes for ALL students in Tennessee is the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) model. This framework integrates Tennessee State Standards, assessment, early intervention, and accountability for at risk students in the belief that ALL students can learn.

What is RTI²?

The RTI² framework is a multi-tiered delivery system aligned with the department's beliefs and allows for an integrated, seamless problem-solving model that addresses individual student needs. This framework relies on the premise of high-quality instruction and interventions tailored to student need where core instructional and intervention decisions are guided by student outcome data. In Tennessee, the education system will be built around a tiered intervention model that spans from general education to special education. Tiered interventions in the areas of reading, math, and/or writing occur in general education depending on the needs of the student. A parent or the school district may refer a child for an evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability. If a student is suspected of an educational disability at any time, he or she may be referred by the student's teacher, parent, or outside sources for an initial comprehensive evaluation based on referral concerns. RTI² cannot be used to deny/delay a request for evaluation [OSEP Memo 11-07].

In Tennessee, the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) Framework is a component of TNCORE. The TNCORE implementation plan has three legs with student achievement at the center:

- Assessment alignment and transparency
- Instructional materials and curriculum
- Quality training and meaningful support

What does the RTI² Framework look like?

The RTI² Framework has three tiers. Each tier provides differing levels of support.

- In Tier I, all students receive research-based, high quality, general education instruction on grade level standards that incorporates ongoing universal screening and ongoing assessment to inform instruction.
- In Tier II, intervention is implemented when assessment indicates that a student is not making adequate gains from Tier I instruction alone. In addition to Tier I instruction, students are provided small group interventions designed to meet their specific needs. These students are progress monitored weekly or every other week using a tool that is sensitive to measuring changes in the student's individual skills.
- In Tier III, more intensive interventions are provided to students who have not made significant progress in Tier II, who are more than 1.5 grade levels behind, or who are below the 10th percentile. These students are progress monitored weekly or every other week using a tool that is sensitive to measuring changes in the student's individual skills.

What are the key components of the RTI² Framework?

- All children receive high quality curriculum and instruction in the general education classroom (Tier I).
- Schools conduct universal screenings. Universal screenings review the performance and progress of all students through brief assessments. Universal screenings help schools identify students who may need more support or other types of instruction.

As a result of universal screenings, students may be identified as needing targeted intervention (Tier II) in addition to the high quality instruction they are receiving in Tier I. Research based interventions are used to support students in the area(s) in which they are struggling. Research based interventions are teaching strategies or methods that have been proven effective in helping children learn.

- Progress monitoring is a way for teachers to take a snapshot of how children are doing on a specific skill. It shows how well the intervention is working. It includes formal and informal assessments. Progress monitoring helps determine whether an intervention is successful or needs to be changed. This information is shared with parents on a regular basis.

When progress monitoring indicates that the intervention is no longer needed, the child continues to receive support from the general education curriculum (Tier I). When progress monitoring shows that a child is not responding to the intervention, another approach or intervention may be tried. If a higher level of support is needed, students may be given more intense intervention that further focuses on the supporting skills they need to be successful learners (Tier III). Students who do not respond to Tier III interventions may be referred for special education.

Ensuring the Success of ALL Students

A state manual and implementation guide have been made available to all local education agencies. The *Response to Instruction and Intervention Manual* marks a significant point in our state's development, reflecting our state-level, collective intent to engage in large-scale systems change. The purpose of the RTI² Implementation Guide is to assist LEAs with school wide problem solving and to equip them with the practical decision-making tools that maintain the integrity of the RTI² framework.

As stated in the Tennessee RTI² Manual, all schools in Tennessee will utilize evidence-based practices, instructionally relevant assessments, data-based decision making, and effective professional development in order to ensure the success of ALL students.

For more information, please contact: RTI.questions@tn.gov