

# Implementing RTI at the High School Level

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Some slides from:

Shinn, M. (2010). *Implementing RTI at the High School Level: How You Get Started*. Paper presented at NASP 2010 Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

Shinn, M. (2010). *Advanced Workshop on Implementing RTI at the High School Level*. Paper presented at NASP 2010 Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

Danielson, L., Coleman, M., Rose, T., & Scala, J. (2010). *High School Tiered Interventions: How High Schools are Using Tiered Frameworks*. Paper presented at CEC 2010 Convention & Expo, Nashville, TN.

# Objectives

- Advance understanding of implementing RTI at the high school level.
- Identify and discuss key contextual factors that influence the implementation of RTI at the high school level.

# Big Ideas for Educators

- Better tools
- Better training
- More support

## Vision for High School with Respect to Providing Multi-Tier Interventions for All Students

Tier 1: Increasing tools, training, and support for content area teachers

Tier 2: Organize more effective and efficient remedial programs or content area supports for at-risk students

Tier 3: Clarify the mission of special education and provide better tools, training, and support

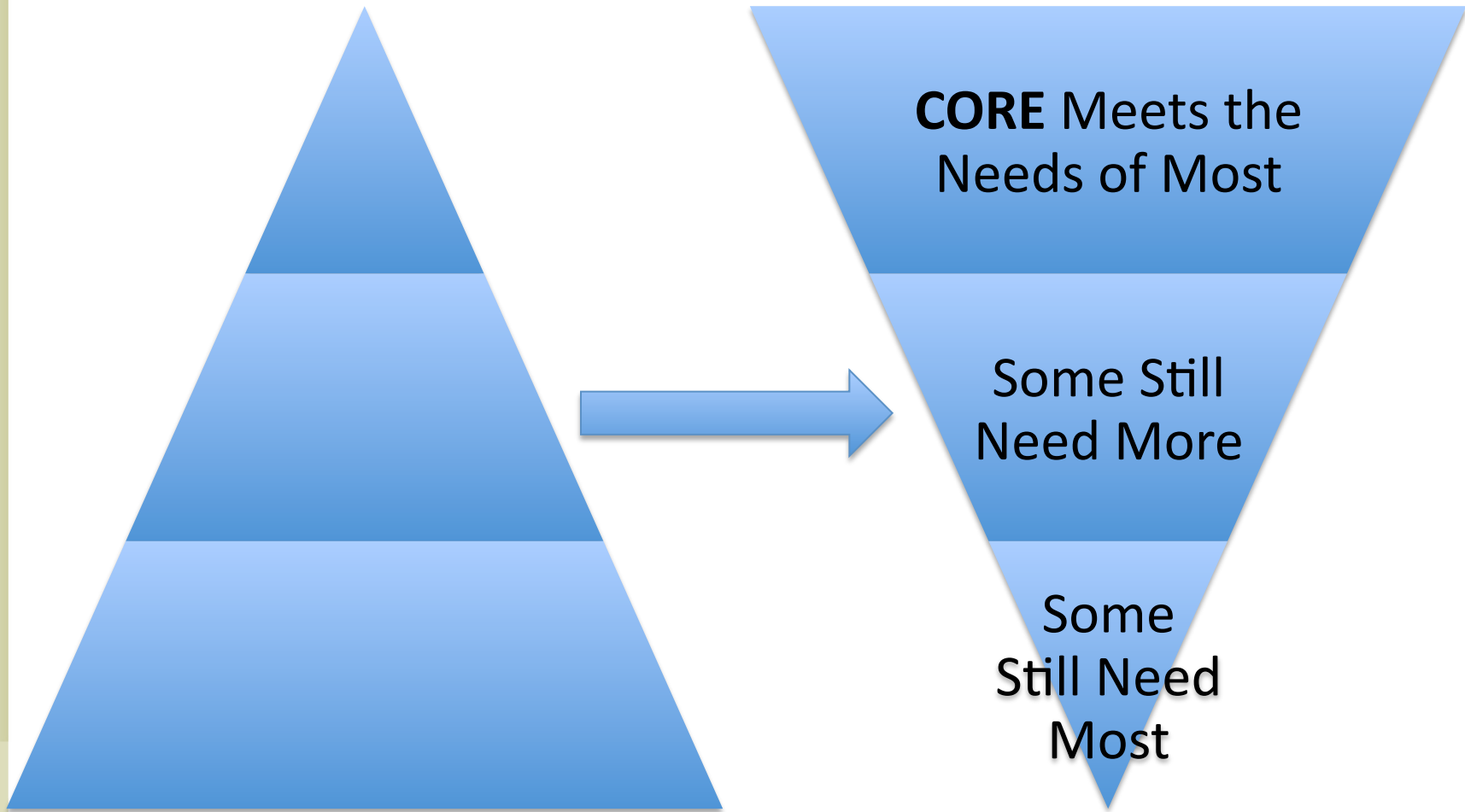
# RTI was Designed to Fix Some Things...

- Complaints from 30 years of practice
  - Wait to fail
  - Too many kids without serious educational need qualifying
  - Too few kids with serious educational need NOT qualifying
  - Too many meetings
  - Too much paperwork
  - Too few powerful results
- Results from 30 years of school-based research
  - Schools collected lots of data, much of which was ignored during entitlement
  - SLD was often about power and politics
  - Too few powerful results

# What Is Not RTI

- The old way of doing business with a new label
- Reinventing a system that focuses on identifying a disability as the goal
- Expecting the general education teachers to meet the needs of all students

# A Multi-Tier Model



# Strategies to Improve General Education Content Teaching Skills

- Good syllabi
- High quality grading
- Big idea focus
- Embedded Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) in pedagogy
- Strategies to Increase Engagement
- Effective, School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support
- Common Assessments for Formative Assessment and Potential Screening



# First Steps to Implementing RTI

- Leadership
- Take inventory
- Ensure that special education is worth getting
- Commit to improving the quality of tier 1 instruction

# Leadership

- Build commitment
- Give permission and guide the abandonment process
- Allocate resources
- Coordinate staff development
- Ensure that work gets done

# Take Inventory

- What's in the tool box?
- Are secondary special education staff and/or related services competent?
- Secondary staff development
- Syllabi that reflects good pedagogy
- An effective grading system

# Ensure that Special Education is Worth Getting

- The Dilemma: Current Special Education is Often Well-Intentioned but Not Aligned with Need

Many secondary special educators may experience increased pressure from parents, administrators, general educators, and students to provide *homework assistance and review or re-teach content-area subject matter*.

Deshler, Ellis, and Lenz (1996) acknowledged that special educators may get caught in this *tutoring trap*, which is a *costly error implemented at the expense of teaching students strategies they can use in their inclusion classes*.

# Ensure that Special Education is Worth Getting

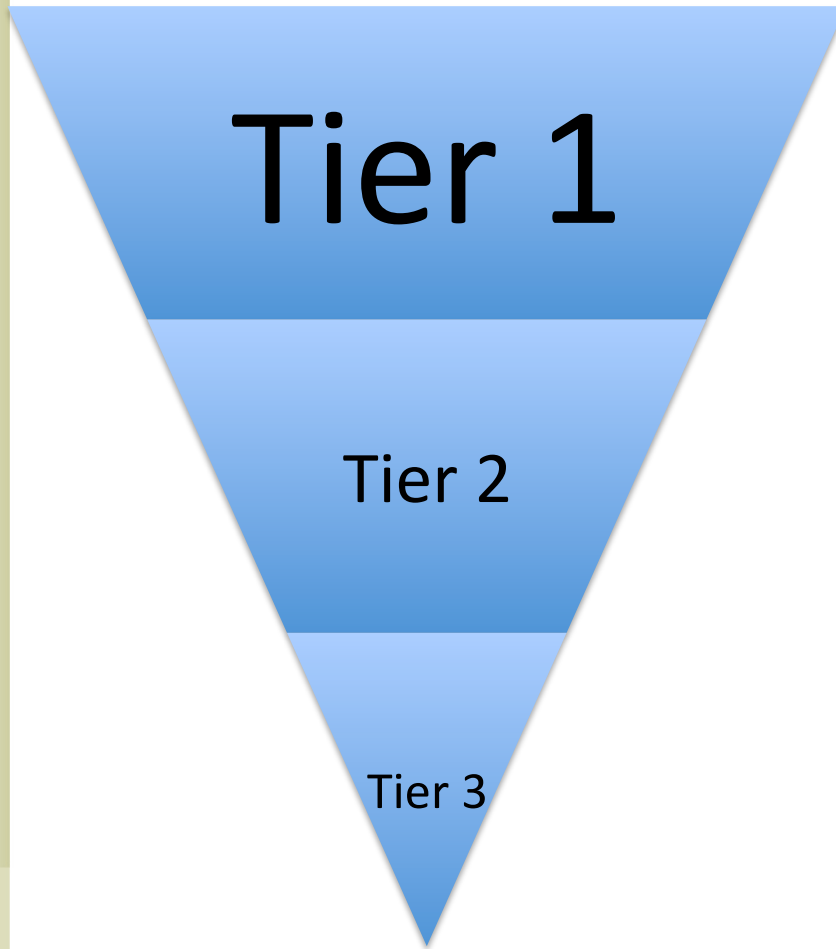
- Create a mission and vision statement for your special education program

Without a central philosophy or purpose, special education programs-- especially resource rooms-- *lack definition and can easily become tutoring programs--* or anything else others deem it to be.

Be *proactive* in *defining* and *protecting the purpose and integrity of your program*. The mission or vision statement clarifies the *intent* of the program, its philosophy, and the *core responsibilities* of the special education teacher, the paraprofessional, and the students.

Conderman, G., & Petersen, T. (2007). Avoid the tutoring trap. *Intervention in School & Clinic*, 42, 234-238.

# Commit to Improving the Quality of Tier 1 Instruction



- High Quality Syllabus
- High Quality Grading System
- Well Designed Curriculum
- Effective Strategies to Increase Engagement
- Effective Secondary Classroom Management
- Common Assessments for Formative Evaluation and Screening
- Use of Teaching Routines and Learning Strategies

# Big Ideas About Secondary Multi-Tiered Early Intervening Services

- RTI as the secondary level is **MORE** than just SLD eligibility. It is **PART** of an **ORGANIZED EFFORT** to provide all students with
  - *High Quality Instruction Using Scientifically Based Practices*
  - *Early Intervention for Those Who Need It*
  - *Prevention Services*
- By **HIGH SCHOOL**, we would hope that we **WOULDN'T** be **DISCOVERING DISABILITIES** in our students.
- **LOTS** of students have **ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES** in middle and high school- **EVERY PROBLEM LEARNING IS NOT A SIGN OF A LEARNING PROBLEM.**
- **SECONDARY RTI** is about **IMPROVING TIER 1 CONTENT AREA INSTRUCTION** and building **TIER 2 SUPPORTS FOR AT RISK STUDENTS** for academics and behavior
- **SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION** needs a **CLEARER** and **MORE CONSTRAINED FOCUS.**
- We know **WHAT TO DO.** We need to **PUT IT TOGETHER.**

Much of this presentation is based on a chapter written for the RTI Answer Book

Shinn, M.R. (2008). RTI as the secondary level. In S.L. Fernley, S.D., Norlin, J. (Ed.). *What do I do when...The answer book on RTI*. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.



# High School Tiered Interventions Initiative (HSTII)

- Collaboration among three national technical assistance centers
  - Center on Instruction (Special Education Strand)  
[www.centeroninstruction.org](http://www.centeroninstruction.org)
  - National Center on Response to Intervention  
[www.rti4success.org](http://www.rti4success.org)
  - National High School Center  
[www.betterhighschools.org](http://www.betterhighschools.org)
- Goal is to enhance the understanding of how tiered intervention models are emerging in high schools

# HSTII Approach

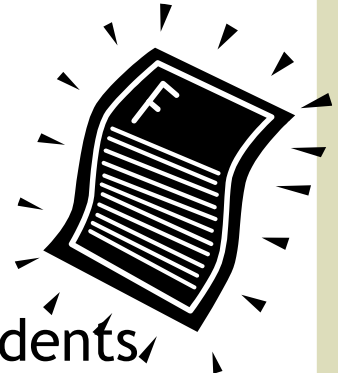
- Identified high schools implementing tiered interventions based on recommendations
- Contacted 51 high schools
- Interviewed 20 high school administrators
- Convened Technical Advisory Group
- Conducted 8 site visits

# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS

- Focus
- Culture
- Instructional Organization
- Staff Roles
- Student Involvement
- Graduation Requirements
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Implementation and Alignment
- Instruction and Assessment Resources

# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Focus

- All sites identified improving student achievement as primary goal
- Targeted strategies based on their data
  - Reducing D's and F's
  - Existing initiative for reducing number of students who are late to class



# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Culture

- Synergy between current beliefs and RTI language
- Small learning communities to facilitate connections among students and between students and teachers



# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Instructional Organization

- **Master Schedule**
  - Administrator as a “master scheduler”
  - 4x4 block schedules use “seminar”
  - Traditional 6-8 periods
    - Guided study halls
    - Elective time

# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Staff Roles

- Intervention/Classroom Instruction

- Co-teaching Classes

- Data Team Members

- Content Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Administrators
- Paraprofessionals
- Literacy Coach
- School Psychologist
- Integrated Program Staff



# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Student Involvement

- **Student-Centered Problem Solving Approach**
  - Collaborative decision making process
- **Student Data Tracking**
  - Graphic representations





# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Graduation Requirements

- Tier II and Tier III interventions recorded as:
  - “Study Hall” → no credit
  - Elective credit



# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder Involvement
  - Parents invited to problem-solving meetings
  - Build upon existing initiatives
- Training and Support
  - Overall RTI framework PD
  - PD on individual interventions
  - Small learning communities



# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Implementation & Alignment

- Coordinated Initiatives
  - Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
  - Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
  - Check and Connect
  - Other school-wide programs
- Leveraged Resources
  - Staff roles (literacy coach, school psychologist, security staff, counselors, etc.)
  - Prioritizing existing PD, time, staff meetings, classroom space, etc.

# Contextual Factors Unique to RTI in HS: Site Visit Examples of Instruction and Assessment Resources

- Professional/Teacher Learning Communities
  - Weekly
  - Focused on student data
- Determining Interventions & Data Sources
  - Data from previous school
  - Avoidance of duplicating feeder intervention programs

# Questions?