

RTI/MTSS & SoR: What NYS School Leaders Need to Know

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Guiding Questions

- What are the “science of reading” origins of RTI?
- What was the intent of RTI?
- What happened?
- What are the non-negotiable structures for building an effective RTI/MTSS system?

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What Are the Origins of RTI?

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1970s and 1980s
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act

- aka Public Law 94-142
- states receiving federal funds must provide FAPE for students with disabilities

1977 Federal Definition of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

- included “a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability”
- “Pre-referral teams” gained in popularity
- CST, SST, the other SST, BESST, S-BIT, etc.

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1990s - 2004
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

1990 Reauthorization of Public Law 94-142

- renamed Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

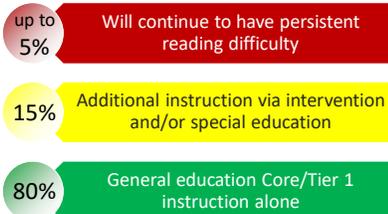
Criticism of Severe Discrepancy Model Grew

- converging research that regardless of IQ, most students respond favorably to certain types of systematic, explicit reading instruction
- Severe Discrepancy Model debunked

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If instruction is aligned with the scientific
evidence base, what percent of students
should meet benchmark?



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2004
P.L. 108-446, 614 (b)(6)

2004 Reauthorization of IDEA

- first time RTI language shows up in federal legislation
- “a local education agency **shall not be required** to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability”
- “**may use a process** that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as part of the evaluation process”

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April 2008
Memo to School Administrators from NYS Department of Ed
[8 NYCRR section 200.4(j)]

*“Effective on or after July 1, 2012, a school district **shall not** use the severe discrepancy criteria to determine that a student in kindergarten through grade four has a learning disability in the area of reading.”*

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April 2008
Memo to School Administrators from NYS Department of Ed
[NYCRR section 100.2(ii)]

1. Defines RTI to minimally include:
Appropriate instruction delivered to **all students** in the **general education class** by a qualified professional. Appropriate instruction in reading means **scientific research-based programs** that include **explicit and systematic instruction** in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills), and reading comprehension strategies.

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April 2008
Memo to School Administrators from NYS Department of Ed
[NYCRR section 100.2(ii)]

Additional Components Addressed in the NYS RTI Definition include:

- Universal screenings
- Targeted interventions
- Progress monitoring using curriculum-based measures (CBMs)
- Parent notification
- Staff development of “knowledge and skills necessary to implement (RTI)”

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What Was the Intent of RTI?

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If instruction is aligned with the scientific evidence base, what percent of students should meet benchmark?

- up to 5% Will continue to have persistent reading difficulty
- 15% Additional instruction via intervention and/or special education
- 80% General education Core/Tier 1 instruction alone

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RTI Intentions

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

- To ensure the most effective reading instruction for all students
- To eliminate inadequate instructional opportunity as a cause of reading failure and students being labeled as having SLD in reading
- To avoid the “waiting to fail” phenomenon by using empirical data and targeted interventions to monitor and positively affect student achievement trajectories

What Happened?

What Happened in the US?

(Balu et al., 2015)

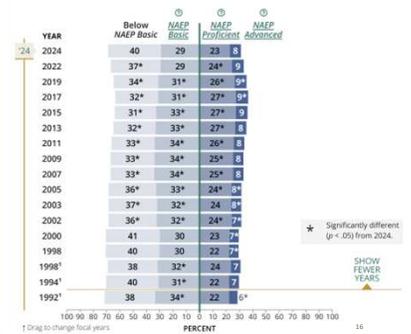
Evaluation of Response to Intervention Practices for Elementary School Reading

- RTI did not produce positive effects on reading achievement
- RTI produced negative effects on reading achievement for some students

What Happened in the US? Grade 4

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Image credit: nationsreportcard.gov

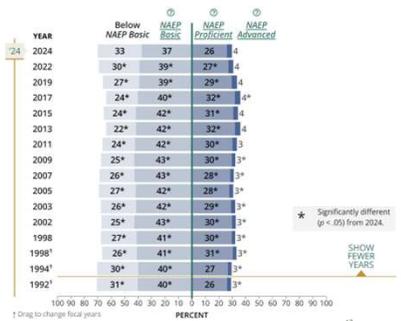
FIGURE | Trend in fourth-grade NAEP reading achievement-level results



What Happened in the US? Grade 8

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Image credit: nationsreportcard.gov

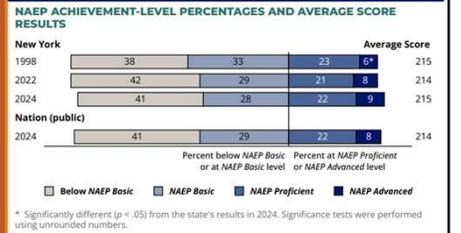
FIGURE | Trend in eighth-grade NAEP reading achievement-level results



What Happened in NYS? Grade 4

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Image credit: nationsreportcard.gov

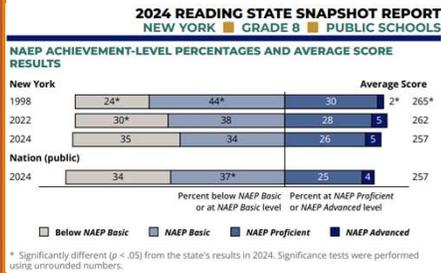
2024 READING STATE SNAPSHOT REPORT NEW YORK GRADE 4 PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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What Happened in NYS? Grade 8

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Image credit: nationsreportcard.gov



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What Happened in My Research Setting?

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

RTI Understanding and Enactment Study

- 15 months of data collection spanning the second and third year of RTI implementation in Grades K-2
- Approximately 1500 pages of interview and observation data, and RTI-related district documents
- Cannot generalize from 1 case study, but it is a good starting point for thinking about how we got where we are now
- How do the findings compare to your experience?

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What Happened in My Research Setting?

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

My Research Questions

- How was the RTI mandate understood and enacted in the school?
- In what ways was reading instruction addressed during RTI implementation?
- How did individuals view their responsibilities and involvement with RTI?

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How Was the RTI Mandate Understood and Enacted in the School?

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

Components were added, rather than a systemic transformation

- Characterized as additive vs. transformative approach to change
- Universal screening and progress monitoring
- New paperwork, intervention service criteria, meeting protocols, etc.
- Hired an RTI teacher

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How Was the RTI Mandate Understood and Enacted in the School?

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

Ironically, RTI implementation resulted in a new label for students, teachers, a service, and a place

- RTI kids
- RTI teacher
- "Getting" RTI
- "Going" to RTI

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In What Ways Was Reading Instruction Addressed During RTI Implementation?

(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

It wasn't.

- Tier 1/Core instruction did not change
- AIS/intervention instruction did not change
- The new RTI teacher was not certified in reading, and had not received any specific professional learning in how to meet the needs of students with significant literacy needs
- Tier 1/Core was based on leveled guided reading
- Intervention/SpEd was based on Reading Recovery and rarely Wilson *Fundations*

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How Did Individuals View Their Responsibilities and Involvement with RTI?
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

General Education

- “RTI is, is like a separate entity.”
- “I don’t really picture RTI as part of your curriculum, part of what goes on in your classroom.”
- “I just look at RTI as just a kind of a separate thing, just more of whatever services.”

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How Did Individuals View Their Responsibilities and Involvement with RTI?
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

Academic Intervention Service

- “I’m basically the AIS reading teacher right now, so I haven’t had to do RTI.”
- “I’m in charge of doing progress monitoring for some students.”

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How Did Individuals View Their Responsibilities and Involvement with RTI?
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

Special Education

- “I did some RTI in the building (before the RTI teacher was hired)... I pulled them from their classrooms in the area of reading.”

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How Did Individuals View Their Responsibilities and Involvement with RTI?
(Beverine-Curry, 2016)

RTI Teacher

- “I’m the RTI person, the only one, really.”

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What Happened Where I Was Working as a Literacy Coach?

How Did We Do It?
(This is not a checklist. It is on-going.)

- Secure professional learning in the science of reading from a vetted expert for admins, teachers, paras
- Provide job-embedded coaching
- Critically evaluate current materials and practices
- Ensure that assessments, Tier 1/Core Instruction, interventions, and special education materials and approaches are aligned with the evidence-base

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If instruction is aligned with the scientific evidence base, what percent of students should meet benchmark?

Instruction Type	Percentage of Students Meeting Benchmark
Will continue to have persistent reading difficulty	up to 5%
Additional instruction via intervention and/or special education	15%
General education Core/Tier 1 instruction alone	80%

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Oral Reading Fluency *Supports* Reading Comprehension
(Stevens, Walker & Vaughn, 2017, p. 576)

“When word recognition is slow and labored, cognitive load is occupied at the expense of understanding.”

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Oral Reading Fluency *Strongly Predicts* Reading Comprehension
(Fuchs et al., 1988, 2001)

Measure	Correlation Coefficient
Cloze	
Recall/retell	
Answering questions	
ORF	

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Oral Reading Fluency *Strongly Predicts* Reading Comprehension
(Fuchs et al., 1988, 2001)

Measure	Correlation Coefficient
Cloze	.70
Recall/retell	
Answering questions	
ORF	

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Oral Reading Fluency *Strongly Predicts* Reading Comprehension
(Fuchs et al., 1988, 2001)

Measure	Correlation Coefficient
Cloze	.70
Recall/retell	.72
Answering questions	
ORF	

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Oral Reading Fluency *Strongly Predicts* Reading Comprehension
(Fuchs et al., 1988, 2001)

Measure	Correlation Coefficient
Cloze	.70
Recall/retell	.72
Answering questions	.82
ORF	

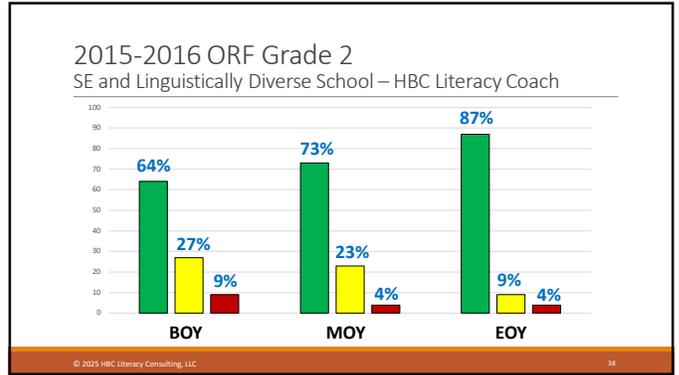
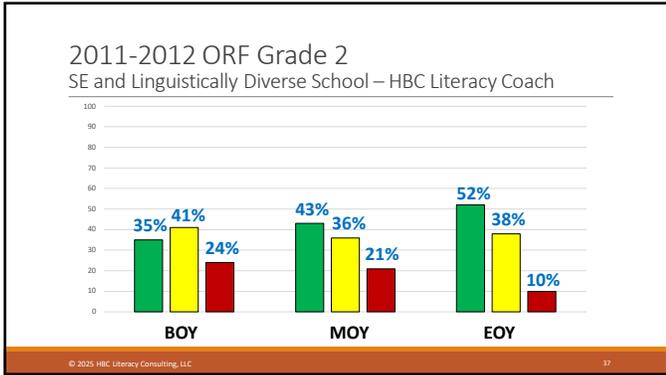
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Oral Reading Fluency *Strongly Predicts* Reading Comprehension
(Fuchs et al., 1988, 2001)

Measure	Correlation Coefficient
Cloze	.70
Recall/retell	.72
Answering questions	.82
ORF	.91

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What Structures Do We Need for an Effective RTI/MTSS System?

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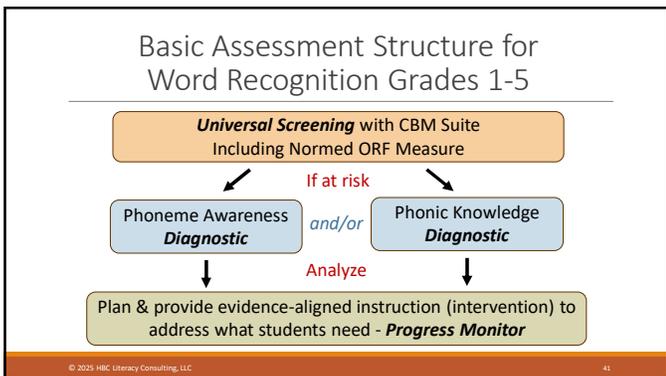
Tier 1/Core Instructional Program Aligned with the Scientific Evidence Base

(Yeah, obviously your interventionists and special ed providers need to use evidence-aligned materials and approaches, but we can greatly reduce the number of students receiving these services if we get it right in gen ed first.)

There are no regulations. Anyone can say their stuff is aligned.

- Beware of slick marketing
- Secure professional learning from a vetted expert to educate your staff or committee on what to look for
- Establish a selection protocol that empowers teachers and centers evidence
- Stick to it... Deviate where necessary and let evidence guide the tweaks

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Universal Screening

All students in grades K-5

- 3 times per year
- Tells us if Core/Tier 1 instruction needs an overhaul
- Identifies students who may be at-risk for reading difficulty early
- Highly-calibrated screen team for clean data collection
- Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) suite that includes:
 - ✓ Early literacy measures in K-1
 - ✓ Normed oral reading fluency (ORF) measures in 1-5
 - ✓ Examples are DIBELS, aimsweb, Acadience, FastBridge

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CBM Suite for Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring

Examples of CBM Suites Nationally Normed Oral Reading Fluency Measures

- Acadience
- DIBELS
- Aimsweb
- Fastbridge

Should You Love CATS?

- Computer Adaptive Tests
- Dr. Stephanie Stollar has a great blog about this! I'll send it along 😊

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Should You Love Computer Adaptive Tests?

Dr. Stephanie Stollar

Should You Love CATS?

Date and Assessment: Mar 30, 2023



Early literacy screening is one of the most important educational technologies available today. I believe districts are not taking advantage of the full opportunity available in universal screening when they choose to use Computer Adaptive Tests (CATs).

What is a CAT?

A CAT is essentially an achievement test that is used to identify risk status. Students take the test on a computer. The test includes items that have been selected from new to hard. Students are first presented with items somewhere in the middle of

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Why CATs Aren't Useful for Early Literacy Screening

(Stollar, 2023)

- Not always accurate
- Not useful for planning instruction
- Not designed for progress monitoring
- Not production responses
- Not measures of essential early skills
- Not appropriate for K-1
- Not standardized
- Not criterion-referenced
- Not easy to interpret
- Not able to aggregate across students
- Not given by teachers (humans)

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What to Use Instead

(Stollar, 2023)

"CBMs fit the criteria for universal screening and provide educators with the information they need to prevent reading failure and provide effective early reading intervention."

- brief
- standardized
- reliable and valid
- criterion-referenced
- indicators of early literacy skills
- instructionally relevant*
- inclusive of forms for progress monitoring
- predictive of future reading success

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Progress Monitoring



Students in grades K-5 below/well-below benchmark

- Tells us if the intervention is working
- Every 2-4 weeks
- Classroom teacher, interventionist, special educator
- Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) suite that includes:
 - ✓ Early literacy measures in K-1
 - ✓ Normed oral reading fluency (ORF) measures in 1-5
 - ✓ Examples are DIBELS, AimsWeb, Acadience, FastBridge

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Holly's Universal Screening DIBELS ORF-WC

Grade	B/M/E	Raw
2	B	16
	M	22
	E	20
3	B	24
	M	no data
	E	70
4	B	35
	M	79
	E	88
5	B	62
	M	90
	E	-

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Holly's Universal Screening DIBELS ORF-WC

When ORF is below the 35th percentile compared to national norms, a student's dysfluency is likely impeding comprehension because cognitive load is being occupied for effortful word recognition at the expense of understanding... *even with high accuracy.*

Grade	B/M/E	Raw	% ile
2	B	16	24 th
	M	22	16 th
	E	20	15 th
3	B	24	13 th
	M	no data	-
	E	70	25 th
4	B	35	10 th
	M	79	14 th
	E	88	18 th
5	B	62	16 th
	M	90	20 th
	E	125	35 th

This should be Holly's EOY goal

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Diagnostic Assessments



Students in grades K-5 below/well-below benchmark

- Tells us what to teach
- After initial Universal Screening and as needed
- Classroom teacher, interventionist, special educator

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Data & Planning Culture



Meet regularly to analyze data and plan next steps

- What does the data tell us about our Core/Tier 1 instruction?
- Are 80% of students meeting benchmarks?
- If not, what is the plan to tighten up Core/Tier 1?
- What does the data tell us about students who need more support?
- What is the plan to support them?

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