Brave New World: 

RtI and Catholic Schools

Outcomes

- Describe the paradigm shift in special education delivery systems
- Name the opportunities created by this shift

Traditional System of Special Education Service Delivery

1. Student experiences difficulty
   - Strategies
     - Team Referral
       - Additional Strategies
         - Referral for Evaluation
         - If problem decreases, continue strategies
   - Eligibility Conference
     - Yes, IEP or ISP is developed and implemented
     - No eligibility, continue strategies
Definition of Eligibility

- Ability
- Processing Deficit
- Potential Achievement Discrepancy
- Exclusionary Factors

Concerns

- Concerns with assessment techniques
- "Wait to Fail" Model
- "Definition of Learning Disability"

The Shift

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446) Provisions

- LEAs shall not be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability
- LEAs may consider a student's response to scientifically based instruction

2006 IDEA Regulations (§300.307(a)) require each state to choose its SLD eligibility “criteria” from among the following options:

- Severe discrepancy—may provide or prohibit
- RtI—must permit
- "Other alternative research-based procedures—may permit

Responsiveness to Intervention (RtI) is not specifically identified in the law.
LEAs are given the flexibility in determining SLD implementation options.
Using special education funding to provide early intervening services for all students is permitted.

Source: RTI Manual-National Research Center on Learning Disabilities
Caveat

- Know your state regulations regarding Response to Intervention. Regulations will vary state to state.

Characteristics of RtI
- High quality, scientifically-based instruction
- Student assessment with classroom focus
- Continuous progress monitoring of students
- Implementation of appropriate research-based interventions
- Progress monitoring during interventions
- "Teaching behavior" fidelity measures

Source: RTI Manual-National Research Center on Learning Disabilities

Education as Prevention

Two Key Assessment Techniques:
- Universal Screening
- Progress Monitoring
The New Factors that will shape eligibility decisions:

★ Progress
★ Discrepancy
★ Instructional Need

1. Progress
   - History of Previous Interventions
     - Limited or poor response
     - Improved response to interventions that are too demanding to be implemented without special education resources

2. Discrepancy
   - Given equal or enhanced opportunities, the students' current level of performance and/or rate of improvement is significantly lower than typical peers or identified standards

3. Instructional Needs
   - Instructional needs have been identified that are beyond what can be provided in general education. This is evident when curriculum, instruction, or environmental conditions need to be very different for the students as compared to the needs of other students in the general education environment.

Summary of Systems

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<th>Response to Intervention</th>
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<td>Individual response for identified student</td>
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What are the implications of this shift for Catholic Schools?
Response to Intervention can present Catholic schools with a framework to re-discover flexible and creative approaches that can provide educational opportunities for more students.

**Tier One Strategies**

**Key approaches**

- Written and agreed upon curriculum
- Use of evidence based instructional strategies
- Positive approaches to the teaching of behavior
- Use of data to make instructional decisions

**Key Indicators-Curriculum**

- Written, standards-based curriculum
- Collaborative planning process
- Identified proficiency targets
- Responses for struggling students
- Responses for excelling students
- Common Assessments
- Data-based adjustments to teaching

**Key Indicators-Data Systems**

- Evidenced based decision making
- Data collection system in place
- Data readily available
- Artifacts assist data analysis
- Time provided to analyze data
- Data informs teaching
- External assessment discussion
Key Indicators-Instructional Strategies

- Talk about effective teaching strategies
- Teachers collaborate on implementing strategies
- Values use of DI
- Evidence of DI in the classrooms
- System to address students who struggle
- System to address students who excel

Key Indicators-Positive Behavior

- 3-5 agreed upon school-wide behavioral expectations
- System to teach behavioral expectations to students
- System to teach behavioral expectations to transfer students
- Plan to celebrate student success
- System to collect data on student behavior
- Data used to make changes in school program

Tier Two Strategies

Key Approaches

- Intervention begins with auditing the school program to determine the existing ways that struggling students are supported (both behaviorally and academically)
- Goal has to be developing a comprehensive system (‘One stop shopping’) for providing help to students

What is a Targeted Intervention?

- An intervention (or set of interventions) known by ALL staff and available for students during the school day.
- Interventions provide ADDITIONAL student support in academic, organizational, and/or social support areas.

Critical Features

- Intervention is continuously available
- Rapid access to intervention (less than a week)
- Very low effort by teachers
- Positive system of support
- Students agree to participate
- Implemented by ALL staff/faculty in a school
- Flexible intervention based on data

Basic rule:

Do the least amount to produce the biggest effect!
The Use of Teacher Assistance Teams

Teacher Assistance Teams

• Developing one access point for teacher referrals
• Collaborates on developing interventions and monitors the progress of students
• Decides on the need to develop more intensive strategies

Michael J. Boyle, Ph.D.
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