RTI and Students Who are Gifted

Mary Ruth B. Coleman, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
FPG Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
RTI Philosophy
Early Intervention to Support Strengths

★ The child/student first
★ Services must match the child/student
★ Allocation of resources
RTI Model/Approach
Key Features

☆ Tiered approach to supports and services
☆ Universal screening, progress monitoring, assessment
☆ Use of Evidence-Based Practices and Standard Protocols to respond to child/student needs
☆ Data Driven Decision Making process
☆ Collaborative problem-solving approaches to child/student needs (Parental involvement)
RTI Model/Approach
Tiered Approach to Services

☆ Intensity of support increases as intensity of child/student’s needs increases

☆ Flexibility in services and supports to meet student needs

☆ Matched with Data Driven Decision Making

☆ Nurturing potential & Early Intervention
  • Culturally/Linguistically Diverse
  • Economically Disadvantaged
  • 2e Students

© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
Tier 1

- General Classroom that offers a quality strengths-based learning environment
- Focus on nurturing potential in all children
- Use of dynamic assessments
- Differentiation of instruction with high-end learning opportunities
- Universal Screening for potential in all students
Tier II

- Collaboration with gifted education to provide more intense supports when needed
- Additional supports provided to students based on strengths (e.g. abilities, skills, interests)
- Differentiate instruction based on student’s data
- Parental involvement
- Progress Monitoring (Curriculum Compacting)
Tier III

- More intensive support gifted education may take the lead
- Assessments include a body-of-evidence approach (e.g. full portrait of strengths and needs)
- Nomination for formal identification
- Parents involvement in decision making
- Sustained differentiation needed in areas of strength
RTI Model/Approach
Universal Screening, Progress Monitoring, Assessment

★ Awareness of child/students strengths
★ Dynamic check-points to “monitor progress”
★ Data driven decision making
RTI Strategies
Screening, Progress Monitoring, Assessment

Appropriate Assessment of Students

Assessment is a key part of Creating a High-end Learning Environment.
What is needed is a change of perspective concerning assessment and evaluation. This change of perspective asks…

☆ That we see what children are doing rather than what they are not doing.

☆ That we understand children learn & progress developmentally & uniquely, not by grade level.

☆ That assessment & evaluation match instruction in the classroom, with the teacher & student as the primary evaluators.

☆ That the progress of a child is documented over time & based upon a variety of evidence rather than on a test.

☆ That we find other ways to show growth rather than rely on numerical summaries.


© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
Assessment

Systematic and Purposeful methods for looking at where you or your students are in order to plan for where you or they are going.
Assessment

How do you know what your students know?

☆ Prior knowledge (pre-assessment)

☆ Learning/teaching loop (embedded assessment, also called progress-monitoring)

☆ Mastery point (post or final assessment)
Multiple Assessments of a Learner

- Norm Referenced & Criterion Referenced Tests
- Paper–Pencil Tests
- Performance Assessments
- Samples of Work: Portfolio
- Informal Measures:
  - Observations
  - Conferences
- Self–Assessments
- Peer Feedback

© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
Data: Information that “drives” or helps in planning & decision making

- Achievement
- Interests/Passions/Motivation
- Multiple Intelligence
- Learning Styles/Preferences/Strategies/Approaches
- Aptitude
- Ecology/Context Home & Family
- Disability Areas
- Social & Emotional Needs
RTI Strategies

☆ What are you currently doing to monitor children/student’s progress? How does this fit across the three tiers?

☆ What are you currently doing to address the needs and gifted children/students? How do these supports and services fit within the three tiers?
RTI Strategies
Standard Protocols

☆ Evidence–based responses that provide additional support (e.g. William and Mary Curriculum, U-STARS~PLUS, Triad Enrichment Model, Autonomous Learner Model, Renzulli Learning)

☆ Strategies that promote high-end learning (e.g. questioning techniques, acceleration, enrichment, problem-based learning)

☆ Differentiated instruction

☆ Readily implemented with fidelity

© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
RTI Model/Approach
Collaborative Problem–Solving

☆ Individual child/student with more complexity
  • Culturally/Linguistically Diverse
  • Economically Disadvantaged
  • 2e Learners

☆ Intensity of needs (e.g. highly gifted learners)

☆ Pooling resources

☆ Parents as part of the team and decision making

© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
RTI Strategies
Collaborative Problem–Solving

☆ Team approach to child’s strengths and needs
☆ Parental involvement
☆ Vehicle for planning that goes beyond standard protocols (e.g. acceleration, social emotional, interest-based)
☆ Planning for gifted students with more complex needs (e.g. twice exceptional learners, ELL)

© Mary Ruth Coleman, 2008
RTI Model/Approach

☆ How does this model/approach fit with existing general/special/gifted education structures?

☆ What challenges are you facing (or will you face) as you integrate this approach within general/special/gifted educational supports and services?

☆ How will the RTI approach differ for early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school needs?
Additional RTI Questions

What structures do you currently have in place that facilitate collaboration (e.g. shared planning time, joint advisory groups, etc.)?

What will you need to do to collaboration across

(a) stakeholders;
(b) programs; and
(c) schools?
Special Issues for RTI and Gifted Students

☆ Twice exceptional students

☆ Nurturing potential Early Intervention
  • Culturally/linguistically diverse
  • Economically disadvantaged

☆ Affective needs of gifted students
Challenges with RTI for Student’s with Advanced Academic Needs

- Misuse of progress monitoring to hold children back instead of move them forward;
- Misuse of interventions versus enhancements; shift in thinking
- Continued need for funding and support for intellectual and emotional nurturing of potential
- Continued need for professional development to support teachers
- Increased need for collaboration among special, general, and gifted education
Potential of RTI for GT

☆ Strengthen Collaborations with General and Special Education
☆ Address issues of Disproportionate Representation
☆ Promote Early supports to Nurture Potential
☆ Address the needs of 2e Learners
☆ Enhance General Curriculum with a focus on Strengths!