

Assessment: The process of measuring and documenting what students have learned.

Baseline Data: Basic information on a student's current performance level, which is gathered before a program or intervention begins. It is the starting point used to compare a student's learning before a program or instruction begins.

Benchmark Assessment: The periodic assessment (a minimum of 3 times per year) of all students compared to age or grade level standards.

Collaboration: Cooperation between two or more people with shared goals and perceived outcomes, occurring in a climate of trust.

Core Curriculum: The planned instruction in a content area, which is central and usually mandatory for all students of a school (e.g. reading, math, science).

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM): A concise method used to find out how students are progressing in basic academic areas such as math, reading, writing, and spelling.

Data-Based Decision-Making: The use of student data to guide the design, implementation, and adjustment of instruction.

Differentiated Instruction: Instruction that matches the specific strengths and needs of each learner.

Early Intervening Services: A set of coordinated services for students in kindergarten through grade 12 (with particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through grade 3) who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in general education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows school districts to use up to 15 percent of their federal special education funds to develop and implement early intervening services, unless required based upon disproportionality.

English Language Learners (ELLs): Students whose first language is other than English and who are in the process of learning English.

Explicit instruction: Instruction that is clear, deliberate, and visible.

Fidelity: Using a program or method of instruction as it was intended to be used.

Five "Big Ideas" of Reading: Critical areas of reading for all tiers of the RtI framework:

- **Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and the understanding that spoken words and syllables are made up of speech sounds (Yopp, 1992). Print is not involved. For example, asking the student: "What sound do you hear at the beginning of the word cat?" or "What word rhymes with tree?"
- **Phonics:** The basic concept that letters represent segments of speech. Students are taught letter names, the relationships between letters and sounds, an understanding that these relationships are systematic and predictable, and the use of these relationships to read and write words.

- **Fluency:** The ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to decoding (the ability to apply knowledge of letter sound relationships, including letter patterns, to decipher and pronounce written word), thereby allowing the reader to focus attention on the meaning and message of the text. Text is read with appropriate intonation and expression that sounds very much like conversational speech.
- **Vocabulary:** Vocabulary development involves word knowledge, word instruction, word learning strategies and usage.
- **Comprehension:** The process of constructing meaning from written text. It includes such skills as: activating prior knowledge, literal understanding of what is read, sequencing, summarizing, making inferences, predicting, and making connections between new and unknown information.

Flexible Grouping: The ability for students to move among different groups based upon their performance and instructional needs.

Instructional Intervention: Clear, deliberate and carefully planned instruction delivered by trained personnel tailored to meet the identified needs of struggling students.

Intensive Intervention: Instruction delivered with increased opportunities for practice and feedback.

Multisensory: Engaging the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (movement) senses at the same time.

Outcome Assessment: The measurement of how students have performed at the end of planned instruction or at the end of the year.

Parental Engagement: The meaningful and active involvement of parents and family members in the educational process.

Progress Monitoring: Continuous measuring and comparing of student learning to determine progress toward targeted skills with the purpose of appropriately adjusting instruction.

Research Based Interventions: Instructional programs, strategies, methods, and materials that have been proven to work.

State Standards: What students should know and be able to do at grade level. The Pennsylvania State Standards are available at: www.pde.state.pa.us.

Standards Aligned: The process of matching curriculum, instruction, and materials to the Pennsylvania State Standards (what students should know and be able to do).

Systematic Instruction: Carefully planned teaching based on the identified strengths and needs of students.

Targeted Instruction: Teaching that is focused on an identified goal and based on the identified strengths and needs of a child.

Universal Screening (School-Wide Screening): A quick check of all students' current levels of performance in a content or skill area. This is administered three times per year.