

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Date: September 1, 2009
SUBJECT: Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII)

TO: Intermediate Unit Executive Directors
Intermediate Unit Special Curriculum Coordinators
Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors
School District Superintendents
School Building Principal
Special Education Directors

FROM: Diane Castelbuono, Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Dr. Edward Vollbrecht, Director, Bureau of Teaching and Learning Supports
John J. Tommasini, Director, Bureau of Special Education

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB 2001) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) support the involvement of all students in the general education curriculum and the use of research based interventions to improve student achievement. Additionally, IDEA 2004 permits school districts to use a process to intervene early with struggling students and to determine if a child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures for students with learning disabilities. In Pennsylvania, this assessment and instructional framework is known as Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII). This Penn Link, (developed at the Secretary's directive,) provides school districts with guidance and direction regarding the implementation of RtII and the reporting requirements.

Specifically, this PeNNLINK:

1. Endorses RtII as the assessment and instructional framework to organize and implement Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS) to improve student achievement.
2. Connects RtII with Pennsylvania's School Improvement Process: Pennsylvania's continuous school improvement framework, Getting Results!, and RtII share design components. Both are driven by a strong emphasis on the use of data to discover root causes of the state of student achievement, and, based on the findings, design and implement solutions (instructional practices) to improve student learning.
3. Establishes a state-level RtII Team: Representatives from each Bureau will constitute a team to ensure the alignment of RtII and state-level tasks/activities.

4. Defines RtII implementation and reporting requirements: Schools implementing RtII are required to complete an RtII School Survey Form by October 1st of each school year and will update the survey by March 31st of each year. The survey can be accessed at [<http://www.pattan.net>]www.pattan.net (click on RtII School Survey). In addition, schools choosing to use RtII to determine specific learning disabilities (SLD) eligibility must obtain approval from the Bureau of Special Education. Questions regarding this process may be directed to the Bureau of Special Education 717-783-2311 or [http://www.pde.state.pa.us/special_edu/site]www.pde.state.pa.us/special_edu/site. Finally schools are encouraged to:

- a. Seek technical assistance and guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, their local intermediate unit or the PaTTAN serving their region to complete the RtII Self Assessment, establish implementation priorities, develop an action plan and link RtII efforts to other school/district initiatives and,
- b. Document the impact of RtII on student achievement.

For additional guidance on RtII, see Response to Intervention in Pennsylvania: A Standards Aligned Strategy to Improve Student Achievement, at [<http://www.pattan.net>]www.pattan.net.

Questions regarding this PennLink may be directed to:

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