

**Response to Intervention
California Department of Education
Webcast Training Series
Discussion Questions
<http://www4.scoe.net/rti>**

The California Webcast Training Series was compiled by the California Department of Education to provide both general and special educators with basic information about Rtl. There are five 1.5 hour-long videos (indicated below). Although they were created in California, the videos are publicly available, free of charge and provide guidance by leading researchers and practitioners of Rtl and the content is general enough to be used by any school.

1. **Why implement Rtl?** Jack Fletcher, Dan Reschly & Dave Tilly
2. **What is Rtl?** Sharon Kurns & Amanda VanDerHeyden
3. **Administrative Issues in Rtl:** George Batsche, Judy Elliott & Roy Applegate
4. **Instruction in Rtl systems:** Wendy Robinson & Barbara Moore Brown
5. **Getting Started with Rtl:** Margie McGlinchey & Alnita Dunn

There are also accompanying power point presentations. These materials can be accessed by going to the website indicated above and then clicking on the "Materials" bar at the top of the page. Then click on the video materials desired. This is a great resource and the California Department of Education should be commended for outstanding professional development materials they have provided to the education community. This is a helpful resource to provide a general foundation of knowledge for administration and faculty when launching an Rtl initiative. Although it is likely that the content itself will generate a high level of interest and enthusiasm for further investigation into Rtl, below are some questions that could be used to initiate discussion.

Video 1: Why Implement Rtl?

Jack Fletcher:

General Questions:

- Discuss the links between IDEA and NCLB
- Jack says that instructional factors can cause disability. Discuss how this can be possible.
- What instructional factors could contribute to over identification of children in special education?
- What do we think about “wait to fail?” How does our current system resemble this model?
- Jack presents many problems with using the IQ achievement discrepancy and the problems with this model? What evidence have we seen of the problematic features of that model?
- Jack talks a lot about the “cognitive processes model”. Discuss the lack of utility in this model and what information would be more useful to teachers and interventionists.

Dan Reschly:

General Questions:

- Discuss how current practices in your schools are aligned or not, with research.
- What is already in place that is consistent with the solutions presented in this section?
- Dan provides an easy to understand explanation of the connection between the research, policy analysis, and policy changes to lay the foundation for moving to an Rtl model. Discussion of this connection would facilitate better understanding of Rtl and that it is not just the next “new trend” in education.

Specific Questions:

- 23 min/45 sec: What would you do with Egbert?
- 27 min/47 sec: Have veteran teachers talk about how they’ve experienced the changes that Dan talks about.
- 46 min/30 sec: Discuss how resources are currently allocated.
- 53 min/ 43: Dan says that the curriculum needs to be scientifically based AND instructional practices and procedures need to be scientifically based. What elements of our current curriculum, materials, and instruction are grounded in science and where do we need improvement and professional development?
- 58 min/ 03 sec: Consider Egbert again...what elements of our current procedures are similar to the traditional system presented?

David Tilly:General Questions:

- What has kept us from being as effective as we'd like to be? What are the current philosophical and system barriers?
- Talk about how "add-on" programs (at-risk, Title I, etc.) contribute to the problem of "disjointed incrementalism."
- Initially the programs seem to make sense...why don't they ultimately work?
- Define how the current system responds to needs and have teachers share personal experiences as examples of successes or frustrations.

Specific Questions:

- 63 min/ 38 sec: Answer the question that David poses about reading programs.
- 69 min/ 8 sec: Talk about Melissa...

Video 2: What is RtI?

This video could either be watched in its entirety or stopped along the way for discussion.

Sharon Kurns: Sharon provides a good presentation to prime thinking about many big ideas in education.

General Questions:

- Discuss the paradigm shift of the problem not being within the child.
- How do we ensure that all students are involved in the core program? What improvements do we need to make here?

Specific Questions:

- 5 min/48 sec: Generate discussion related to the foundational beliefs presented and how they do or do not match with stated district beliefs, mission, or vision.
- 8 min/50 sec: Talk about how the myths may be similar to or aligned with what is currently done and how improvements could be made.
- 27 min/31sec: How are data currently collected to provide information needed to design instruction?
- 39 min/ 30 sec: Do we have a comprehensive assessment system in place that provides information at the screening, diagnostic and formative levels? What assessments are specific to each level? (i.e. DIBELS could be utilized at screening and formative levels).
- 44 min/44 sec: Stop the video after each critical step is presented and have a discussion.

Amanda VanDerHeyden

General Questions:

- What universal screenings are being used for math, reading, and writing? What needs to be added or improved upon?
- How are standardized administration procedures maintained? Why is this important?
- Amanda makes the screening process sound very simple, and for the most part it is? However, what potential issues would we need to be prepared for to conduct efficient and quality screening?
- Amanda promotes utilizing staff in new ways, such as having a school psychologist be involved in an intervention team to support the teacher. Talk about this and what would need to happen with other duties for this to happen.

Specific Questions:

- 68 min: Amanda presents some information here that may be different than other models or information out there. Be prepared to consider or at least point out that there is no “one best” or specific model of RtI. Amanda mentions implementing an evidence-based intervention for 10-15 days

before considering going to eligibility if the student is significantly below expectations AND not making improvements AND data were collected daily. This is going to a departure from what other say so try not to get caught in the trap of establishing timelines at this point. Remember, many other pieces need to be in place and a 10-15 day timeline may not be right for your school or a particular student.

Video 3: Administrative Issues in RtI

This section seemed most appropriate for district or building level administrators.

Roy Applegate: Roy's perspective seemed to have more of a special education flavor than the previous presenters. He used the phrase "receiving services" quite frequently. Considering what the other presenters have said, "receiving services" should not be interpreted as special education, but synonymous with appropriate instruction. Think of "services" very broadly!

General Questions:

- What needs to change first?
- Roy said this "takes years." How do we go about maintaining a cohesive and consistent vision to last through employee changes?
- Roy said that special education caseloads could drop as a result of this process? Rather than reducing staff, what could be some alternatives in how to use these staff in a different way? Remember...work smarter not harder!

Specific Questions:

- 4 min / 54 Seconds: Roy just finished presenting the goals of RtI from a special education perspective. Now consider this purely general educational perspective considering the needs of all students. What could be some areas that need to be added?
- 4 min/ 49 sec: Consider the advantages Roy presented about rural settings. What are the local resources and advantages that we have?
- What are some local disadvantages that we'd also have to consider?

George Batsche and Judy Elliott

General Questions:

- How do we currently provide direction, guidance, and vision for the staff and how could we improve?
- Brainstorm questions and write them down on a large post-it.
- Talk about what it means to "help" a student? Some perceive "help" as special education, but "help" within an RtI model means appropriate instruction based on a student's needs regardless of who delivers it.
- Generate discussion about how general education and special education currently work together to support each other? Be open and honest about how they support each other or are they two separate systems?

Specific Question:

- 50:31: Answer George's question about what type of data we currently have from the curriculum?

Instruction in Rtl Systems:

Barbara Moore Brown:

General Questions:

- Talk about the shift in thinking to considering the impact of curriculum and instruction on learning before looking at within student variables.
- Are our general and special education programs connected and supportive of each other or are they separate systems? What evidence do you see of either?
- What programs and resources do we use at Tier I (Core); Tier II and Tier III. It might be helpful to actually create a list and then investigate whether or not they are grounded in research.

Specific Questions:

- 8 min / 50 sec: The following two significant components need to be in place within a school, generally speaking, before a student should be considered for special education services. 1. The core program needs to be scientifically based and appropriate, meaning that it is consistent with guidelines set forth with ESEA/NCLB. 2. Interventions need to be scientifically based provided through the general education setting and consistent with ESES/NCLB. What does this mean for us?
- 28 min / 28 sec: Have participants from different disciplines talk about how they see their role changing in light of what they have learned. Challenge them to think big, outside the box, and dream!

Wendy Robinson

General Questions:

- Talk about the reading assessments that are being used for screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcomes. How do we review the data systematically and systemically? What do we need to add to have a comprehensive assessment system?
- What do our current supplemental programs look like? Are we accelerating students? Wendy talks about not pulling kids out of the core...how can we do this?
- Are we addressing all the elements of the literacy diet? Be honest, self-evaluative, and critical. List specific examples of how the curriculum, materials, and instruction address each area, the time spent daily on each area and how it is done in a comprehensive and connected way.
- Talk about how to find, list, disseminate, organize, etc. the necessary features of the literacy diet to design effective instructional routines: identifying critical features, grade level skills, and high priority skills at each grade level.
- What process is currently used to match instruction and strategies to student needs? How could this be improved?
- Have teachers share "routines" they currently use and teach. This could be helpful for special and general education to hear each other's routines

so they can support each other. If no "routines" can be identified maybe some need to be developed for the critical skills.... have the participants consider this.

- How does our instruction demonstrate the characteristics of effective instruction (explicit instruction, systematic instruction, ample practice and immediate feedback)? Do we need some improvement? How do we do this with whole group instruction?
- What administrative support and professional development would we need to do what Wendy is talking about? Make a list!

Specific Questions:

- 33 min / 47 sec: Does our reading program contain the elements that Wendy references related to an effective and comprehensive core reading (scientific reading research addressing the big five, coherent design of explicit instructional sequences, ample practice, adequate materials for all levels of readers, instructional materials aligned with state standards, adequate protected time). Be specific and honest here...list the examples.
- 1 hr / 17 min / 43 sec: Wendy identifies the key components that are needed to accelerate student growth. This could be overwhelming for teachers to consider...talk about this and what resources and support they would need to do this...particularly the piece on "skillfully delivered."

Jack Fletcher

Jack provides a very brief, but very powerful illustration of the power of instruction can have in normalizing brain functioning. Talk about this.

Video 5: Getting Started with RtI

Margaret McGlinchey

This section is self-explanatory and explicit about how to get started and seems most appropriate for administrators and district leadership teams. Simply addressing the questions from the power points will keep the discussion going for hours! It would be helpful to have someone take notes and facilitate discussion.

Alnita Rettig Dunn

Alnita provides information about how the Los Angeles Public Schools implemented RtI and is worth watching.

Jan Mayer

This section is quite short and provides a brief description for learning supports that address the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs that students will have. Have the participants talk about how these issues are currently being addressed in schools now.

Madera High School and Jackson Elementary

This section highlights two schools that have implemented RtI. The presenters are practioners and not researchers. They have actually gone through it and are excited to share their experiences. This section could be motivating and helpful for teachers to hear. Jackson Elementary does a nice job of highlighting collaboration and joint accountability between general and special education.