

October 30-31, 2006 Project Forum's Policy Forum on Response to Intervention and Early Intervening Services (barriers, policy recommendation and implementation considerations)

This document is the work document that is a companion to the formal policy forum proceedings document found at

<http://www.projectforum.org/docs/RTIasitRelatestoEIS.pdf>.

Vision

Fully implemented high quality Response to Intervention and Early Intervening Services.

Issues/Barriers

Team 1

- Policy coherence with other school reform initiatives. RTI is not in No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
- Lack of awareness at the local level
- Exemplars are only at the elementary level and in reading with a few in math
- View that this is simply a pre-referral to special education interventions
- No national coordination
- Delay in informal engagement of families
- “Nothing new” camp versus “this too shall pass” camp (resistance)
- Perception of stark differences in approaches to RTI
- Varying levels of competence of teachers and administrators
- Capacity of teachers to do progress monitoring
- Capacity of teachers to consistently use best instructional practices across all students and all subject areas
- The belief that it is too complex
- Lack of general education involvement at both SEA and LEA levels
- Minimal capacity to sift through the latest research and translate it into practice
- Shift in roles and responsibilities causes hesitancy for many
- Ensuring high quality instruction in all schools
- Ability to do data-driven decision making
- Resistance to changing general education model in “successful” schools to research-based instruction
- Lack of capacity for widespread TA
- Lack of well-conceived implementation planning
- Moving too fast
- Scheduling causes a barrier
- Backlash if RTI is triggered as a result of disproportionality
- Conflicting purposes for learning disability (LD) identification or school reform
- There is no one model
- Money
- Lack of awareness of what schools are doing to make transition easier

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Barriers that most hinder effective implementation of RTI/EIS from Team 1

- Lack of Resources: Technical assistance (TA) capacity, money, and lack of national coordination
- Lack of Capacity building infrastructure to ensure high quality instruction, do data driven decision making, do progress monitoring, include parents, provide widespread TA
- Policy incoherence: RTI is not in NCLB
- Research and development: Not enough exemplars beyond elementary school reading
- Conflicting beliefs and values: Purpose for LD identification, school reform or student improvement? Should we have "research-based" or "successful" practices? Is this pre-referral, something we already have in place, or something different?

Team 2

- Strong belief in dual system of education is built into our culture
- We don't look at instructional practices. We don't know who is responsible for quality instruction.
- Curriculum is being defined as instruction.
- Assumption that quality instruction has occurred.
- Parents do not know how to ask the right question and understand the answer regarding instruction.
- State educational financial formulae create and sustain dual educational systems
- Research and TA documents are not user-friendly for practitioners and families
- Practitioners are waiting for more direction and some are not waiting, but moving ahead without direction.
- Misinformation is abundant.
- Achievement gap has existed since the inception of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
- Expectations are low for kids who are not achieving, so will do nothing different.
- Unsure what we mean by "implementing an RTI model".
- Conceptual understanding of purpose and outcome are not clear
- Origin of the reform is in special education, not regular education law.
- Top down mandates cause practitioners to be unable or unwilling to implement.
- Educators are not treated as professionals.
- RTI's emphasis is problem solving for decision making. NCLB's emphasis is standardized tests for decision making.
- Concern/perception that due process will be denied.
- There is no free appropriate public education (FAPE) mandate for general education students
- Higher Education is not preparing practitioners to implement RTI.

Barriers that most hinder effective implementation of RTI/EIS (Team 2)

- The fundamental belief that some kids can't learn
- The belief that there must be a dual system to have FAPE, due process, and equitable funding. Interface between general and special education in policy and practice is unclear.

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- Research, training and TA information for practitioners and families do not provide accessible direction and are not user-friendly.
- Assumption that quality instruction has occurred and a consensus definition has not been found.
- Conceptual understanding of RTI model, purpose, implementation and outcome.
- Top down mandate causes resistance.
- General education law emphasized standards-based assessment and RTI emphasizes individualized problem solving.

Team 3

1. Limited or lack of pre-service/in-service training. Limited capacity, knowledge, tools. Need for professional development
2. Lack of equitable funding infrastructures for education. Fiscal resources: acknowledgement of importance – ensure resources
3. Mobility, time, consistency, dedication of resources.
4. Perceptions of RTI as “good education” versus “best practice”. Implementation regarding scaling up.
5. Perception of RTI as a special education issue.
6. Limited/lack of comprehensive training for parents regarding general education curriculum, standards, and curricular issues.
7. Education personnel who are reluctant to use progress monitoring tools.
8. Lack of research regarding reading for later grades (beyond 3rd grade).
9. Limited research regarding tier 3 interventions.
10. Competing educational demands
11. Perceptions of impetus for initiative. Drivers? NCLB, educational pressures, system burdens
12. Lack of time to address numerous demands
13. Perception that this is a “whole new thing”
14. Need for best practices now – need to move forward.
15. Lack of cohesiveness. Need to blend NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
16. General education is not always at the table. Need cohesiveness between policy developers and implementers. Disparity of roles across policy (general education) and implementers – special education.
17. Perception that this is “more work”.
18. State policies that do not allow support of RTI and models for identification other than discrepancy model. Incompatibility between current state statutes and RTI.
19. Failure to connect initiatives historically and connect current practice with past practice
20. Perception that “general education” is the barrier
21. RTI is being led by special education. This can be a barrier. It is not a special education initiative.
22. Perceptions of legal influence. Adverse implications of legal actions.
23. Limited continuity- communication across institutes of higher education (IHEs) and state education agencies (SEAs).
24. Perceptions that IHEs are not research venues.

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Barriers that most hinder effective implementation of RTI/EIS (Team 3)

- Current funding structures do not support building and maintaining RTI infrastructures
- “Baggage” of belief systems inhibit ability to progress as collaborative stakeholders.
- Mismatch between current research and immediate needs for implementation
- Challenge to prioritize and address competing demands
- Current policies, procedures, practices do not support vision of quality education for ALL children. Limited system capacity to accommodate change.
- Lack of information awareness for parents; lack of professional development/pre and inservice; lack of funding for infrastructure.

Team 4

- Lack of Access to effective RTI for English language learners (ELL) students
- Lack of Meaningful youth involvement in the RTI process
- Lack of Classroom teacher knowledge about RTI (how to make adjustments and what to do about it)
- Focus on /emphasis on LD eligibility versus struggling learners”
- Need for understanding of RTI on part of district and building-level leaders
- Need for state level understanding and acceptance of RTI to effect real system change.
- Teachers do not know how to use research-based instruction
- Fidelity of implementation – knowledge and practice levels
- Need clarification of RTI outcome – is it an integrated approach in all grades?
- Need a Total commitment to a variety of approaches
- Need to know How to start the RTI process (how to do it)
- Higher education needs to get on board
- Defining tertiary interventions as special education makes for an attachment to the old model (Tier 1: general education; Tier 2: Title I; Tier 3: special education)
- Parent support/lack of parent understanding – the system doesn't include parents at all levels
- Lack of options for Tier 2 assistance
- Lack of understanding of the interplay and potential interdependency between RTI and EIS

Barriers that most hinder effective implementation of RTI/EIS (Team 4)

- Leadership at all levels to effect RTI systems change. (RTI/EIS interplay)
- Continuum of professional development
- Fidelity of implementation
- Total commitment to a variety of approaches
- Parent and youth involvement at every step of the process
- Understanding of RTI for populations such as ELL/racial and ethnic differences
- No national coordinating body for RTI roll out that functions across policy, practice, research and implementation

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Team 5 (bolded barriers = barriers that most hinder effective implementation of RTI/EIS)

- **RTI seen as a complex process. Both general and special education, parents, policy makers. Many pieces, hard to put together. Lots of nuances.**
- **RTI viewed as a special education. In IDEA and is monitored by special education. The name and where it is coming from = special education.**
- **Limited/insufficient time and resources (people) for the huge change represented (both special education and general education).**
- Across the systems (general and special education) the opportunities to build on are not clearly articulated.
- **Buy-in across local education agency (LEA), SEA, and federal level – lack especially at the top (administration). Common understanding not in place. Connection with NCLB and school wide underdeveloped. Benefits not realized.**
- Redwood tree approach is overwhelming.
- Training is geared to special education not the general education teachers who are key to implementation.
- Overemphasis on looking first at the learner and overlooking need for well trained professionals (in both general and special education). Quality of training issues.
- Limited or no longitudinal information on outcomes for LD – including middle school and high school needs. Data not being collected.
- Limited research-based interventions except in early reading skills and some in early math.
- RTI after upper elementary is a relatively unknown entity. Implementation is unstudied.
- Lack of engagement of parents early in the process and lack of models and procedures (teachers and parents are often mutually intimidated).
- Teachers' perceptions that they will be held accountable in inappropriate ways.
- Nature of RTI encompasses broad range of constituencies/roles/responsibilities, yet often the sets are fragmented.
- Gaps and misalignment across levels (local, state, federal). Challenge of how to balance consistency and innovation.
- RTI often treated as static (i.e., cut scores) versus fluid, vibrant.
- Lack of clarity about some aspects of the regulations
- Cultural appropriateness/sensitivity of progress monitoring tools and interventions. Incomplete, not well communicated.
- Regular and special education merge. When and how?
- **Wide range of confidence in knowledge base (including overlooked need for well-trained professionals in both general and special education; quality of instruction; limited longitudinal info on outcomes for LD, including middle school and high school needs; Limited research-based interventions; RTI after upper elementary is relatively unknown.)**
- **Insufficient professional knowledge and practice to engage all the roles across the board.**

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Consolidated Barriers

1. Family involvement	Limited parent and youth involvement at every step of the process	Lack of engaging parents early in the process	Lack of models and procedures for How to engage parents	Limited youth understanding of what can be done to address needs especially after transition from high school.
2. Misaligned Policies	Current policies, procedures, practices do not support vision of quality education for <u>ALL</u> children. Education personnel who are reluctant to use progress monitoring tools; competing educational demands; perceptions about overburdening the system or having already done this; Lack of cohesiveness between NCLB and IDEA. Misalignment between state policy and practices	Gaps & misalignment within and across levels (local, state, fed). Challenge of clarifying what guidance/policies are needed at different levels of the system to determine non-negotiables and what is flexible.	Emphasis on standardized testing. RTI emphasizes problem solving as primary tool for decision making whereas NCLB emphasizes standardized testing as the primary tool	Policy incoherence. Lack of policy coherence with other school reform initiatives (NCLB). Lack of general ed involvement at LEA and SEA levels
3. Conflicting beliefs and values	Belief in a dual education system. Fundamental belief that special ed kids can't learn (low expectations)	Baggage of belief systems inhibit ability to progress as collaborative stakeholders	No total commitment to a variety of approaches. Defining tertiary intervention as a special education system.	View that this is only pre-referral intervention.
4. Leadership for change(gaps)	Leadership at all levels to effect system change: Support the interplay of RTI & EIS (bldg, district and state leadership)	Top down mandates cause resistance. Grassroots, where instruction occurs should be a more driving force	No national coordinating body for RTI roll out - Fragmentation of the infrastructure	
5. Disparate knowledge & skills	Inadequately trained personnel to implement all aspects of RTI. Lack of training for all partners including pre and in-service, parents, community, and universities	Continuum of professional development	Knowledge & skills are central to RTI process. Higher ed preparation in problem solving, data analysis. Need quality TA/professional/family developments. Need dissemination of	Lack of funding for all partners including pre-service, in-service, parents, community, and universities

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			research/evidence-based practices in a cohesive manner to all parties (joint training)	
6. Gaps in Research	Range of confidence in "knowledge base" (research information)	Mismatch between current research and immediate needs for implementation	Need for more research & development	Understanding of RTI for diverse populations, such as English Language Learners (ELLs), students from radically & ethnically diverse backgrounds: access to RTI for all students
7. Limited system capacity to accommodate change	Limited: capacity to ensure high quality instruction; ability to use data for decisions; competency of teachers and administrators about quality instruction and progress monitoring	Challenge to prioritize and address competing demands (time and focus)	Need to disseminate and train on best instructional practices now- can't move forward without it	
8. Insufficient funding	Current funding structures do not support building and maintenance of RTI infrastructures	Lack of resources	Limited/insufficient time & resources for the huge change (general & special ed)	No funds in NCLB. No new funds in IDEA (15% not available to support infrastructure to implement training and tools.
9. Limited fidelity of instruction	Assumption quality instruction has occurred. Need to ensure quality instruction prior to considering tier 2. Need to know what quality instruction looks like/consensus on definition	Limited fidelity of implementation of high quality instruction and progress monitoring		
10. Lack of clarity about characteristics of high quality instruction				
11. Muddled messages	Conceptual understanding of RTI model purpose, implementation and outcome are conflicting	RTI viewed as a special ed initiative. It's in IDEA, monitoring. Need buy in across fed, SEA, LEA. Training is geared to sped	RTI is seen as complex process. Hard to put together general, sped ed, parents', policy makers,, and other stakeholders' messages.	"Message" is not user friendly. Parents and practitioners don't understand the language for recommendations for quality practice

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Policy Recommendations

Team 1

Barrier being addressed: Family Involvement

- Parent/family/youth engagement and shared decision making every step of the way (ongoing communication, parent education in what the process is, SEA decision making, LEA decision making, Title I committee, involve Parent Training and Information Centers (PTI) and ESEA parent centers in development, adoption, implementation, and review

Barrier: Fidelity of Instruction

- Needs to be a mechanism in place for schools to determine if there is fidelity of implementation
- Checklist of effective teacher practices
- NCLB addresses these areas
- RTI is framework for facilitating fidelity

Barrier: Misaligned Policies

- Add RTI to NCLB – yearly monitoring is not enough
- Policy on TA (Office of Special Education [OSEP] and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education [OESE] do joint TA around RTI progress monitoring. Connect EIS to Supplemental Education Services in NCLB – be able to use Supplemental Educational Services [SES] for EIS)
- Need a quality control method (NCLB does quality control, but not down to the individual student level -Quality control is limited to professional development). Integrated quality control: use of data to make improvements and develop RTI as a construct of school organization, not a program. Progress monitoring will yield info to help with quality control
- What does fidelity of implementation look like?

Team 2

Barrier addressed: Misaligned Policies

- Incorporate RTI language into NCLB reauthorization
- Change adequate yearly progress (AYP) to growth model formula (embed RTI assessment information data into AYP determinations (i.e., student growth) (also addresses the **Limited System Capacity to Accommodate Change** and **Muddled Messages** challenge/barriers)
- Develop a document that aligns, a unified plan, for including NCLB, including Title I and limited English proficient (LEP), and IDEA/RTI from federal Education Department to state and local levels (also addressed **Muddled Message** challenge/barrier)
- Align or incorporate RTI into school/district accreditation process (also addressed **Fidelity of Instruction** challenge/barrier)

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- Set up funding priorities for TA to provide tools to implement RTI (rubrics, needs assessments software, evaluation) (this also addresses **Insufficient Funding**, and **Gaps in Research** challenges/barriers)
- Establish a Government Accounting Office (GAO) panel to examine funding formulae to ensure better alignment of priorities for all students to be served (for instance, are we spending more time documenting or doing?) (this also addresses **Muddled Messages** barrier)
- Develop a unified federal, state and local level policy statement about RTI
- Create incentive/funding/grant opportunities that address RTI in NCLB (collaboration, coordination of services, EIS, RTI big ideas)
- Allow for flexible funding
- Urge Congress to reauthorize IDEA and NCLB together to align/emphasize EIS and RTI
- Streamline waiver process for flexible funding at the state and federal level

Barrier Addressed: Gaps in Research

- Funding of rigorous research on RTI: Impacts at the following levels: student achievement, teacher outcomes, system outcomes, and specifically for diverse student outcomes (also addresses **Muddled Messages**)
- Require levels of evidence rubrics for every research study
- Conduct research on scaling up effective practices (academic instruction, behavior, and social-emotional and knowledge utilization)
- Drive research from grass roots on up by highlighting the need locally (urban setting-highly diverse, teacher retention problems, etc.)
- Conduct research on what is quality instruction
- Increase the number of studies at middle and high school level student (with struggling students and special ed students)

Top Policy Recommendations from Team 2

- Provide incentive for the use of identified, effective integrated funding mechanisms that support and promote quality practices embedded in RTI.
- Embed RTI language into NCLB reauthorization including growth model AYP, and school improvement plan and in the future, authorize the two laws together
- Set priorities for funding rigorous research including levels of evidence that reform systems in the areas of: quality instruction, diverse learners, scaling up, middle & high school, urban settings/diverse settings
- Set priorities for funding TA and support collaboration, coordination of services and systems change
- Promote the alignment of RTI/EIS into school/district accreditation process
- Request GAO study of how funding formulae promote quality practices and support alignment
- Articulate federal, state and local policy statements about RTI

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Team 3

Barrier being addressed: Misaligned Policies

- Incorporate RTI language into NCLB

Barrier: Limited System Capacity to Accommodate Change

- Provide comprehensive training. To heighten understanding of ID models (use training cadres like IRIS training modules)
- Develop state and local implementation infrastructures with money and personnel: Identify RTI specialist. Create the infrastructure/use coaching model to implement and maintain RTI
- Provide incentives for restructuring school improvement that results in collaborative planning at the bldg level
- Explore different coaching models (Positive Behavior System (PBS), Reading First, Instructional Support Teams, etc)
- Identify critical components and implementation and monitoring tools of RTI/EIS and provide for flexibility and support of specific LEA models
- Continue to encourage research syntheses and the use, development, and implementation tools
- Develop a scale up plan from awareness through implementation with fidelity

Barrier: Conflicting Beliefs and Values

- Develop a marketing strategy and include model demo sites with use of data. Create incentives for LEA implementation
- Encourage interdisciplinary participation in action planning (shared vocabulary)
- Develop a shared agenda across federal state and local agencies
- Provide comprehensive training on critical components of RTI and EIS and heighten understanding of identification models use training cadres like IRIS training modules out of Vanderbilt University. Differentiate between RTI for EIS versus RTI for identification of LD
- Create a common understanding – shared beliefs to encourage interdisciplinary planning and a shared agenda
- Combine/align RTI and NCLB accountability provisions and focus on terminology related to high quality instruction rather than RTI

Top 7 Policy Recommendations from Group 3

- Align RTI and NCLB with focus on terminology related to high quality instruction
- Provide comprehensive training on critical components of RTI and EIS
- Develop/implement a marketing strategy
- Develop a common understanding to encourage interdisciplinary planning and create a shared agenda
- Develop state and local implementation infrastructures with designated money and personnel
- Encourage research and the development of implementation syntheses

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Team 4 (Eileen)

Top Policy Recommendations from Group 4

- Fund a national mechanism to coordinate RTI roll-out for all students (fund the “glue”).
- Develop guidelines to help LEAs capitalize on EIS provisions.
- Coordinate funding priorities to support effective RTI practices across all Department of Education program offices and among all departments serving the age group 0-21
- Establish and support collaborative leadership development teams to implement RTI effectively
- Support students' ongoing involvement in and feedback about their own education

Team 5

Barrier: Muddled Messages

- Develop joint white paper (OSEP and OESE) on what is RTI, how it works with NCLB/IDEA, what's different (new), what are continuity points. (conceptual framework). (this also addresses **Family Involvement** challenge/barrier)
- Disseminate the message (tailored) through various associations and state associations to a variety of audiences on different levels in appropriate formats (to those audiences).
- Conduct events/use media, etc., to get to everyone in multiple media avenues.
- Create a connection across entities to ensure the message does not become misinterpreted and “remuddled” (including what we really know, what we are learning, being open)
- Hold joint training (professional in LD field, families) to ensure same message is given regarding what is RTI, what it isn't, how it can be effectively implemented.
- Research what various stakeholders know and don't know about RTI and who is doing what pieces and what they call it/frame it.
- Develop case studies to illustrate the message (video, etc.)
- Advocate for language about RTI and EIS in NCLB reauthorization. (this also addresses **Misaligned Policies** challenge/barrier)

Barrier: Disparate Knowledge and Skills

- Design a coherent professional development system (various levels) and use existing resources (i.e., Oregon's module approach is a resource; Illinois also; NCLB/IDEA collaborative community also; some SIGs; IRIS Center)
- Create list of non-negotiables with respect to this system and also areas for flexibility
- Create a vehicle/mechanism that keeps people informed about the most promising, evidence-based evaluation procedures and interventions that could be applied to special education. (what's helping to produce Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that are really different). (this also applies to **Leadership for Change** and **Gaps in Research** challenges/barriers)
- Provide training to help inform wise decision on the part of LEAs with disproportionality regarding how to use 15% of IDEA funds for EIS. (this also applies to **Leadership for Change**)

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- Train families and regular education teachers (preservice and inservice) in RTI model and the five components of good reading instruction. (this also addresses **Family Involvement** and **Fidelity of Instruction**)
- Develop policy recommendations (federal level) to states regarding the value of engaging families early in the process. (also addressed **Family Involvement** and **Leadership for Change**)
- Recommend to states that teacher recertification include capacity in RTI.

Top Policy Recommendation from Group 5

- Develop joint white paper (OSEP and OESE) on what is RTI, how it works with NCLB/IDEA, what's different (new), what are continuity points. (conceptual framework). (this also addresses **Family Involvement** challenge/barrier)
- Advocate for language about RTI and EIS in NCLB reauthorization. (this also addresses **Misaligned Policies** challenge/barrier)
- Design a coherent professional development system (various levels) and use existing resources (i.e., Oregon's module approach is a resource; Illinois also; NCLB/IDEA collaborative community also; some State Improvement Grants (SIGs); IRIS Center)
- Create a vehicle/mechanism that keeps people informed about the most promising, evidence-based evaluation procedures and interventions that could be applied to special education. (what's helping to produce IEPs that are really different). (this also applies to **Leadership for Change** and **Gaps in Research** challenges/barriers)
- Provide training to help inform wise decision on the part of LEAs with disproportionality regarding how to use 15% of IDEA funds for EIS. (this also applies to **Leadership for Change**)
- Train families and regular education teachers (preservice and inservice) in RTI model and the 5 components of good reading instruction. (this also addresses **Family Involvement** and **Fidelity of Instruction**)
- Develop policy recommendations (fed level) to states regarding the value of engaging families early in the process. (also addressed **Family Involvement** and **Leadership for Change**)
- Recommend to states that teacher recertification include capacity in RTI.

Priority Policy Recommendations

Top policy recommendations from each group were shared, combined as appropriate, and renamed as necessary to refine and capture the full meaning of the recommendation. Participants put one dot each on the three policy recommendations they believed to be most important. Following are the consolidated recommendations with more in-depth descriptions and the number of participants who felt each recommendation was one of the most important.

The criteria used for prioritizing was:

1. Those that have the greatest impact on reaching the vision
2. Do first things first
3. Consider what's hardest and what's easiest
4. Get the best bang for your effort – far-reaching effects
5. Unifying efforts – something all can work on

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6. Consider what we know already about scaling up

- **Embed RTI language into NCLB reauthorization:** This would include changing AYP to a growth model, embedding RTI into school improvement plans, and a focus on disproportionality and high quality instruction (29)
- **Design a coherent professional and family development system for various roles including building principals and general education teachers in RTI and high quality instruction.** This includes developing the content and training modules. Possibly use IRIS Center models on RTI (17)
- **Develop guidelines to help LEAs capitalize on EIS provisions** (15)
- **Clearly and fully describe high quality instruction characteristics and indicators**(14)
- **Establish and support collaborative leadership (LEA & building levels) development teams to effectively implement RTI**(14)
- **Focus on the fidelity of implementation at the classroom level:** A focus on student progress monitoring will yield information to help with quality control. With this, leaders will be able to pinpoint teachers, students, and schools that need more help. NCLB's AYP is not enough. (13)
- **Encourage research, syntheses, and the development of implementation tools:** Checklists, modules, website, journal, newsletter(13)
- **Develop common understanding to encourage interdisciplinary planning and create a shared agenda:** This includes a shared vocabulary, shared agenda across federal, state and local agencies, interdisciplinary action planning (11)
- **Develop state and local implementation infrastructures including designated money and personnel:** Identify RTI specialist, coaching team trainers, provide incentives that result in collaboration (10)
- **Parent/family/youth engagement and shared decision making** (8)
- **Recommend that states' teacher and administration certification and school/district accreditation include capacity in RTI** (7)
- **Align RTI implementation into state plans under NCLB and IDEA (State Performance Plans/Annual Performance Report indicators)** (5)
- **Fund a national mechanism to coordinate RTI for all students.** Establish funding priorities for rigorous research and TA support in the following areas: What is quality instruction? What are best practices for diverse learners? In diverse settings (middle, high school, urban, rural)? Best practice for meaningful parent involvement? How to scale up and support systems change?
- **Develop/implement a marketing strategy:** Develop a joint white paper (OSEP/OESE) about what is RTI, how it works with NCLB/IDEA, and a conceptual framework. Align federal, state, and local policy statements. Conduct media type events in order to reach a variety of audiences. Hold joint training sessions to ensure same message across stakeholders, including families. Include model demonstration sites that make decisions based on data; create incentives for LEA implementation; develop a comprehensive communication plan.

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Implementation Considerations

Team 1

Policy Recommendation addressed: Establish and support collaborative leadership development teams to implement RTI effectively

Level: Federal, SEA, LEA, building (feds and states need to model collaboration)

Groups: OSEP, OESE, Secretary's office, national organizations (they need to push)

Where are the chiefs?

General education groups need to go to Department leadership

Need to connect to state capacity work

- Include Title I directors and PTIs in their role in informing parents
- Use the IDEA Partnership to develop a message to send to OESE/Assistant Secretary. Involve both Assistant Secretaries in a joint activity (Issue: Establishing and supporting leadership at all levels)
- SEA level: Challenge to make it collaborative across general education and special education, need expertise at state level; use state training infrastructure
- National organizations need to model collaboration: State take "go slow" approach; states identify schools already doing RTI and hold them up as models
- Building level: must be school wide implementation; PTA buy in; model collaboration across general education and special education
- LEA level: identify models; orderly process for identifying schools; schools (personnel and parents) can become goodwill ambassadors; where to start: need to decide about implementation
- What do leaders need? (leadership development: used to using data; collaborative atmosphere in their schools; awareness and understanding ; ownership of all students, including students with disabilities; school culture needs to be positive; team building skills
- Strategies: preservice and inservice; leadership academies for local superintendents and principals; state superintendents need to build partnerships with other state organizations; teacher to teacher Ed.D. workshops add data-based decision making; national association convention (pre-conferences)
- Ongoing support (203 years post implementation)
- Some states don't have infrastructures so need to build infrastructure to help LEAs
- LEAs need infrastructure to help schools
- SIGs target use of these funds for RTI
- Develop tools for assessing readiness (at LEA and building levels)
- Get state Chief Education Officers on board "top-down approach"
- SEAs use tool to push the policy: Mandate, incentive, funding, agency capacity building
- School boards need to engage
- Develop a short piece that discusses benefits of RTI that is targeted to specific audiences including train the trainer model – be mindful of vocabulary, use general education terminology
- National organizations and use the IDEA Partnership: Find champions within organizations. Tell them what you want them to do with their organization.

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- Marketing: get articles in organization publication and popular press (opportunity is now, don't lose it); How to market what comes out of this meeting: work with communication experts); Articulate core principle (characterize exemplary programs); bring clarity to the issue; maybe concentrate on a few key organizations (not all 55 partner organizations); would a different name 'sell' better?

Team 2

Policy Recommendation addressed: Describe high quality instruction characteristics and indicators

Levels: Building (principle, instructional team, classroom teacher) State (court will define if the state does not) National leaders (NCATE < specialty program associations

Resources: Research/document that tells what characteristics of high quality instruction are (possibly Ysseldyke, Christianson's work and others; models from PBS and marketing strategies; Growth model implemented; Use EIS funds for this purpose – i.e., supporting instruction.

With What groups: Instruction teams at the building level, principals, individual classroom teachers, departments of education, NCATE and Specialty Program Associations

- Use PBIS model as a guide (use learning principles) to empower schools to develop unifying beliefs around these cornerstones for analyzing instructional conditions (i.e., choosing materials, organization the intro of new info, and matching instruction to task and student)
- Market it. Connect to AYP: RTI=SIP(School Improvement Plan from Title I)
- Use Progress Monitoring Systems and data to build teacher skills and “student growth models”
- Train teachers in best practices at the pre and inservice levels (especially reading and math)
- Provide on-going methods for supporting teachers when they need help (same day) such as the Instructional Support Team process

Policy Recommendation addressed: Establish Funding Priorities for research, development, implementation, and outcome evaluation (i.e., all pertinent components of RTI)

Levels: States, National, Federal, LEA

Groups: Bldg level staff/faculty (action research), School Improvement Teams, TA staff (state and national levels), Researchers (IHE), Parent groups/youth groups, Regional Resource Centers and Comprehensive Centers, NASL (state legislatures)

- Blend general education and sped funding at all levels state and federal (Title I-School Improvement, Title IV-Professional Development, Special education, and state funds.
- Synthesize, Identify gaps, determine new areas of research (i.e., secondary, diverse learners, urban, rural ELL including Limited English Proficient) and family/youth involvement. In other words, scale up. Formal request to Institutes of Educational Sciences (IES), including National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) and general education and OSEP/Regional Resource Centers

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(RRCs)/OESE/comprehensive centers to develop a priority – Request for proposal (RFP) or Request for Application (RFA)

- Formal request to OSEP/RRCs to Identify model state funding formulae Special Education Expenditure Program (SEEP) to help create incentives for development and implementation for RTI (both regular and special education) Repeat RFP or RFA development
- Fund program improvement cycle (through the RFP process) prioritize funding to implement RTI (research-based) performance audit (get member of Congress to request a GAO audit) that includes how to improve implementation
- RFP: Collect longitudinal data to support outcomes of RTI (accurate identification for special education graduation, high school achievement, post-school, etc)
- Request Congress to ask for a financial audit
- IDEA Partnership/Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) invites a collaborative team (special education, NCLB/Title I, Reading First, etc) from each state to develop a coordinated state level funding system (blend funding) for RTI
- NASL annual meeting, Share the “best idea” about funding as related to RTI (state funding – leverage with fed funds that are blended)

Resources needed: Access to the ability to influence priorities (RFP) process

Access to the ability to influence members of Congress

Access to the Secretary of Education

CCSSO buy-in

Access to or buy-in from NASL

A connection with corporations and foundations: Cisco, Gates, Carnegie, Kellogg, etc.

Team 3

Policy Recommendation addressed: Provide comprehensive training and ongoing support to all stakeholders on critical components of RTI and EIS

Levels: federal (government, professional associations, TA and dissemination network: general/special education funded projects including comprehensive centers) state (SEA, universities, professional organizations) LEA (families, district, teachers, students)

Building (teachers, families, students)

- Identify and operationalize critical components of RTI and EIS at each level (come to consensus)
- Take stock (at all levels) what is already in place related to RTI and EIS (i.e., National projects(NCSPM,NRCLD) Model sites, training modules (IRIS), scale up plans, state implementation materials
- Identify and develop materials
- Identify delivery modes (i.e., web based, face to face, Communities of Practice
- Customize materials, models to diverse audiences
- Develop training plan across all levels (i.e., timelines, roles/responsibilities
- Data collection on impact of training
- Evaluation (formative and summative)
- Follow-up and continuous improvement
- Conditions of professional development system: Ensure common vocabulary and common understanding, continuous support and improvement, infrastructure in

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place, build capacity at building level – continuity of support, adaptive/responsive to unique school conditions, evaluation piece (how do you know it is working?)

- Resources: across all levels, state resources currently used (i.e., IDEA partnerships, RRCs, IRIS, NRCLD, IHEs); identify a point of entry at each level

Policy Recommendation addressed: Develop a marketing strategy to articulate federal, state, and local policy about RTI and EIS

Levels: All, including general public, business leaders (economic impact)

- Develop consistent core message(s) across all levels
- Identify effective, broad communication mechanisms across all stakeholders (grassroots, peer to peer, national organizations)
- Evaluate

Things to think about or things to consider:

- Teachers' voice is powerful
- Administrators' voice is powerful
- Embrace grass roots, personalization
- Analogy: 1970s seatbelt campaign or recycling
- Networking across different audiences
- What is the message? What is the hook? Why do this?
- How will RTI impact sped? What will happen to sped role? Fears? Anxiety?
- Uncertainty about future resources to support RTI work
- Marketing strategy needs to address fears and anxiety. Example: School psych provides opportunities to be back in the classroom, to be with kids, "Wow!". This is great! Yes, role may change, but in positive ways. Target this in the marketing effort.
- Think about outcomes message in the marketing, but also what are potential roadblocks or barriers.

Team 4

Policy Recommendation addressed: Promote continuous student progress monitoring to inform instructional decision making

Levels: SEAs, LEAs, building, classrooms

Groups: Higher education, parents, professional organizations, schools districts (superintendent., central office staff), students, state agencies, building level teams, teachers, principals, school boards

Preliminary steps:

- Widely disseminate information to all stakeholders
- Connect the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring (NCSPM) to broader education initiatives
- Disseminate various models to support all tiers geared to all educational audiences
- Provide high quality embedded staff development that incorporates interactive, web based programs and resources
- Value educators by buying time (summer, weekends) for high quality staff development secure buy-in from school community to provide a rationale for progress monitoring for all students

Resources needed:

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- Time, money, highly qualified Strong individuals/leadership, Technology

Policy Recommendation addressed: Coordinate RTI implementation across all stakeholders

Levels: National

Groups: federal and state legislator, SEA's education leadership; LEAs and intermediate units (teachers, principals), advocacy groups and professional organizations

Researchers (what works, translate to practice, program evaluation, IHEs (preservice), families, students

- Define the mechanism (e.g., one coordinating center plus regional centers)
- Leadership should reflect population in schools
- Funding from different Department of Education offices
- Staffed by credible people with relevant knowledge and experience including practitioners, policy makers and researchers
- Embed into infrastructure

Resources needed: Time, patience, facilities, money, highly qualified, collaborative, talented individuals

Team 5

Policy Recommendation addressed: Embed RTI language into NCLB Reauthorization

Levels: Federal and National

Groups: NAEYC, CCE, NEA, NASDSE, AFT, CCSSO, National Title I Directors, NASSP, NAESP, National School Board Association, National PTA, and others

Resources: OESE & OSERS, NASDSE's Partnership Project; advocacy/professional organizations, federally funded national centers

- Connect an analysis of NCLB to determine the intersections with RTI and EIS (OSEP)
- Ascertain what is allowed (regarding braiding funding on intersection points, any audit issues?) (OSEP)
- Determine what groups have an investment in the intersections
- Identify organizations that are working on the language
- Identify the rationale for buy-in
- Spell out clearly what is in it for general education
- Spotlight the special education tools that can benefit general education (screening, progress monitoring, instructional strategies, classroom management tools, etc.)
- Clarify in advance why general educators would not want to buy in
- Consider how IDEA language would help resolve current issues with NCLB
- Think through and document what special education will be in the era of RTI done well
- Give examples of how schools are using the 15% to support the implementation of NCLB
- Highlight data/examples from schools/districts in which school wide EIS services helped all students achieve
- Build a shared vision through conversations

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- Encourage legislative committees of various groups to advocate for this change with legislators (get it on each organization's legislative agenda)

Policy Recommendation addressed: Develop common understanding to encourage interdisciplinary planning and create a shared agenda

- This will likely be achieved as part of the comprehensive marketing plan and the comprehensive professional development plan
- It is calling for the development of a shared vision regarding RTI and EIS among general and special educators on the state and local levels
- This can be an extension of the shared vision shaped by the national organizations for NCLB reauthorization