



Response to Intervention in Special Education

What is Response to Intervention

Idaho Response to Intervention (RTI) refers to the general education practice of matching instruction and interventions to the needs of students as soon as those needs become apparent.¹ RTI is defined in the Idaho Special Education Manual as “A formal process for evaluating student response to scientifically research-based interventions, consisting of the core components of: (1) problem identification, (2) problem analysis, (3) applying research-based interventions, and (4) progress monitoring/decisions rules.”²

The Role of RTI in Special Education

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) define RTI as “the practice of (1) providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs, (2) using learning rate over time and level of performance to (3) make important educational decisions.”³ RTI practices occur within general education as a part of Comprehensive Early Intervening Services (CEIS). RTI is designed to be a school-wide system of support that allows targeted academic interventions to be provided to students prior to an evaluation for special education. A well-designed system encompasses all students, including students with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) does not exclude students with disabilities from receiving instruction within a RTI framework for support outside of their IEP goals.⁴ The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) clarifies that services to students with disabilities must be provided in accordance with each child’s Individual Education Program (IEP) to meet the requirements of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The Role of RTI in Specific Learning Disability Eligibility for Special Education

IDEA indicates that a student must receive appropriate instruction in general education from qualified personnel before determining that student has a specific learning disability (SLD) that requires special education services. IDEA 34 CFR §300.307 requires states to adopt a process for the identification of students with a specific learning disability (SLD) that (1) does not utilize severe discrepancy, and (2) permits the use of a child’s response to research-based interventions as a process.⁵ RTI practices focus on providing appropriate general education interventions that directly relate to the IDEA requirement of a comprehensive and individual evaluation for all students who are being considered for special education eligibility and services. When a student does not make sufficient progress during Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions; data collected from observations, diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring are used as a part of the comprehensive special education evaluation.

The use of RTI strategies cannot be used to delay or deny the provision of a full and individual evaluation, pursuant to 34 CFR §§300.304-300.311, to a child suspected of having a disability under 34 CFR §300.8.

¹Adapted from Special Ed Connection [Special Education Connection](#)

¹ IDEA of 2004, (PI108-446)

² [Idaho Special Education Manual](#)

³ NASDSE, 2006, p. 5

⁴ [OSEP-letter-to-zirkel-01-29-2019](#)

⁵ [OSEP RTI MEMO 11-07](#)