Glossary of Terms

Accommodation
Accommodations are changes in instruction that enable children to demonstrate their abilities in the classroom or assessment/testing setting. Accommodations are designed to provide equity, not advantage, for children with disabilities. Accommodations might include assistive technology as well as alterations to presentation, response, scheduling, or settings. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a child's disability, but do not reduce or lower the standards or expectations for content. Accommodations that are appropriate for assessments do not invalidate assessment results.

Adaptation
Considerations that are given so that a student may participate in the curriculum. Adaptations change the curriculum and invalidate test results.

Aimline
The aim line is also referred to as the goal line. It is the line on a graph that connects the intersection of the student's initial performance level and date of that initial performance level to the intersection of the student's year-end goal and the date of that year-end goal. It represents the expected rate of student progress over time.

At Risk Students for Poor Learning Outcomes
At-risk students are students whose initial performance level or characteristics predict poor learning outcomes unless intervention occurs to accelerate knowledge, skill, or ability development.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
AYP is a statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It requires each state to ensure that all schools and districts make Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by states and as approved by the US Department of Education.

Baseline data
Data that is collected before an intervention or program change begins.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
A behavior plan based on a Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB). It is developed and implemented by a collaborative team, which includes the student and parent. The plan includes positive behavior supports (PBS), identified skills for school success, and specific strategies for behavioral instruction.

Core Curriculum
The core curriculum is the course of study deemed critical and usually made mandatory for all students of a school or school system. Core curricula are often instituted at the elementary and secondary levels by local school boards, Departments of Education, or other administrative agencies charged with overseeing education.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment

Criterion-referenced assessment measures what a student understands, knows, or can accomplish in relation to a specific performance objective. It is typically used to identify a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in relation to an age or grade level standard. It does not compare students to other students.

Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA)

CBA is a broader term than Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), as defined by Tucker (1987). CBM meets the three CBA requirements: (1) measurement materials are aligned with the school's curriculum; (2) measurement occurs frequently; and (3) assessment information is used to formulate instructional decisions. Tucker, J. (1987). Curriculum-based assessment is not a fad.

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)

CBM is an approach to measurement that is used to screen students or to monitor student progress in mathematics, reading, writing, and spelling. With CBM, teachers and schools can assess individual responsiveness to instruction. When a student proves unresponsive to the instructional program, CBM signals the teacher/school to revise that program. CBM is a distinctive form of CBA because of two additional properties: (1) Each CBM test is an alternate form of equivalent difficulty; and (2) CBM is standardized, with its reliability and validity well documented.

Data Point

A data point is one score on a graph or chart, which represents a student's performance at one point in time.

Data Teams

Teams of educators that are responsible for data analysis and decision making and that function at the level of the district, school, and grade (or content area) as well as across grade levels in the same content area (i.e., vertical teams); they include as members school administrators, school psychologists, grade/content area general educators, various specialists and other behavioral/mental health personnel.

Data-Driven Decision-Making

The process of planning for student success (both academic and behavioral) through the use of ongoing progress monitoring and analysis of its data.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction refers to educators tailoring the curriculum, teaching environments, and practices to create appropriately different learning experiences for students in order to meet each student's needs. To differentiate instruction is to recognize students' varying interests, readiness levels, and levels of responsiveness to the standard core curriculum and to plan responsively to address these individual differences. There are four elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated: content, process, products, and learning environment.

Disproportionality
Disproportionality is the over- or under-representation of racially, culturally, ethnically or linguistically diverse groups of students in special education, restrictive learning environments, or school disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions and expulsions) in comparison to other students.

Duration
For the purposes of documenting response to intervention, duration refers to the length (number of minutes) of a session multiplied by the number of sessions per school year. "Sufficient duration" is dependent on a number of factors including the program or strategy being used, the age of the student, and the severity of the deficit involved. Some programs offer guidelines or recommendations for duration. Reading Recovery, for example, limits the number of 20–30 minute sessions in which a child can participate to 100, believing that a child who does not make adequate gains after this amount of time would likely benefit from an alternative intervention.

Early Intervening Services
Early intervening services are the preventative components of No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Early intervening services are implemented to benefit students who manifest risk for poor learning outcomes but have not been identified as needing special education or related services.

Effective Behavior & Instructional Support (EBIS)
EBIS combines PBS (Positive Behavioral Support,) EIS (Effective Instructional Support) and RTI .

Evidence-Based Practice
Evidence-based practices are educational practices and instructional strategies that are supported by scientific research studies.

Fidelity of Implementation
Fidelity refers to the accurate and consistent provision or delivery of instruction in the manner in which it was designed or prescribed according to research findings and/or developers' specifications. Five common aspects of fidelity include: adherence, exposure, program differentiation, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery.

Flexible Grouping
Prescriptive, focused, research-based interventions provided to students by any trained or skilled staff member, regardless of the child's special or general education categorization or the educator's special or general education job description.

Focused Assessment
Formal and informal assessment targeted to specifically plan program service delivery and/or appropriate interventions for student success.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a form of evaluation used to plan instruction in a recursive way. With formative assessment, student progress is systematically assessed to provide continuous feedback to both the student and the teacher concerning learning successes and failures. With formative assessment, teachers diagnose skill, ability, and knowledge gaps, measure progress, and evaluate instruction. Formative assessments are not necessarily used for grading purposes. Examples include (but are not limited to): CBM, CBA, pre/post tests, portfolios, benchmark assessments, quizzes, teacher observations, and teacher/student conferencing.

Frequency

How often a behavior or an intervention occurs. Commonly used in Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA) and Response to Intervention (RtI) research in the context of the three most important factors in considering behaviors of concern: Frequency, Intensity, and Duration. Frequency of an intervention, as an element of its effectiveness, can be a focus of the fidelity of delivery.

Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB)

This term comes from what is called a "Functional Assessment of Behavior"" in the field of applied behavioral analysis. This is the process of determining the cause (or "function") of behavior before developing an intervention or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). The intervention/BIP is based on the hypothesized cause (function) of behavior.

Gap Analysis

Gap Analysis is a tool for measuring the difference between the student's current level of performance and benchmark expectations.

Goal Line (sometimes referred to as an *aimline*)

The goal line on a graph connects the intersection of the student's initial performance level and date of that initial performance level to the intersection of the student's year-end goal and the date of that year-end goal. It represents the expected rate of student progress over time.

IDEA

IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, also referred to as IDEA 2004. It was originally passed in 1975 with the latest reauthorization in 2004. It is a federal statute related to providing a free, appropriate, public education and early intervening services to students with disabilities ages birth through 21.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a service delivery model where students with identified disabilities are educated with general education age/grade-level peers.

Instruction

The method(s) used to deliver the content of a lesson or skill.

Intensity
The adjustment of duration, length and teacher-to-student ratio for a child's academic or behavioral needs.

Intensive Intervention
Intensive academic and/or behavioral interventions are characterized by their increased focus for students who fail to respond to less intensive forms of instruction. Intensity can be increased through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation. Within RTI, intensive is sometimes referred to as *tertiary* intervention.

Intervention
The systematic and explicit instruction provided to accelerate growth in an area of identified need. Interventions are provided by both special and general educators, and are based on training, not titles. They are designed to improve performance relative to a specific, measurable goal. Interventions are based on valid information about current performance, realistic implementation, and include ongoing student progress monitoring.

Learning Disability
The IDEA 2004 definition of a Learning Disability/Specific Learning Disability is: The child does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or State-approved grade-level standards.
(i) Oral expression
(ii) Listening comprehension
(iii) Written expression
(iv) Basic reading skill
(v) Reading fluency skills
(vi) Reading comprehension
(vii) Mathematics calculation
(viii) Mathematics problem solving.

Learning Rate
Average progress over a period of time, e.g., one year's growth in one year's time.

Modifications
Modifications are alterations that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level.

Multi-tiered Model
Providing differing levels of intensity [i.e. universal (Tier I), targeted (Tier II), intensive (Tier III)] based upon student responsiveness to intervention, with ongoing progress monitoring and focused assessment.

Over-Identification
Refers to the over representation of students in special education programs/services that is above state and national averages; identification of more students for services through special education than the proportion of that population in the general population.

Over-Representation
Refers to over representation of students in specific disability-related categories that is above state and national averages.

Problem-Solving Approach within RTI
Within RTI, a problem-solving approach is used to individually tailor an intervention. It typically has four stages: problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation, and plan evaluation.

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)
Positive reinforcers, vs rewards or consequences provided to a child for specific instances of behavior that impedes learning or learning of others (or refraining from behavior) as appropriate for the purpose of allowing the student to meet his or her behavioral goals/benchmarks.

Prescriptive Intervention
A specified response, that focuses on academic or behavioral areas of concern, to meet the specific needs of a student.

Problem-Solving Process
The problem-solving process is an interdisciplinary, collaborative team process which is based on a multi-tiered model and includes data-driven decision making, parent/school partnerships, progress monitoring, focused assessment, flexible service delivery and prescriptive, research-based interventions.

Problem-Solving Team
A collaborative team (which includes parents, general and special educators) that meets to evaluate student data and to plan and monitor prescribed interventions.

Progress Monitoring
Progress Monitoring is the ongoing process that involves collecting and analyzing data to determine student progress toward specific skills or general outcomes. Progress monitoring generates the useful data for making instructional decisions based on the review and analysis of student data. Monitoring student progress, through collection and analysis of data, is an effective way to determine if the instruction being delivered is meeting the needs of the student.

Research-based Instruction/Intervention/Practice

A research-based instructional practice or intervention is one found to be reliable, trustworthy, and valid based on evidence to suggest that when the program is used with a particular group of children, the children can be expected to make adequate gains in achievement. Ongoing documentation and analysis of student outcomes helps to define effective practice. In the absence of evidence, the instruction/ intervention must be considered "best practice" based on available research and professional literature.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is an instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn the task, and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. In this manner, a teacher enables students to accomplish as much of a task as possible without assistance.

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)

A schoolwide, multi-tiered framework designed to develop positive learning behavior in all students. The focus of PBS is on prevention rather than the development of consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Scientific, Research-Based instruction

Curriculum and educational interventions that have been proven to be effective for most students based on scientific study.

Screening

Refers to a quick checklist, survey or probe about a student's development or skills to see if further evaluation is needed.

Secondary Level of Intervention

Secondary intervention supplements primary intervention (i.e., the universal core program) such that students receive additional research-based preventative treatment. Secondary level interventions are often short-term, implemented in small group settings, and may be individualized.

Specific Learning Disability

The IDEA 2004 definition of a Learning Disability/Specific Learning Disability is: The child does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in

one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or State-approved grade-level standards.
(i) Oral expression
(ii) Listening comprehension
(iii) Written expression
(iv) Basic reading skill
(v) Reading fluency skills
(vi) Reading comprehension
(vii) Mathematics calculation
(viii) Mathematics problem solving.

Standard Protocol Intervention
Standard protocol intervention relies on the same, empirically validated intervention for all students with similar academic or behavioral needs. Standard protocol interventions facilitate quality control.

Summative Assessment
Summative assessment is a form of evaluation used to describe the effectiveness of an instruction program or intervention, that is, whether the intervention had the desired effect. With summative assessment, student learning is typically assessed at the end of a course of study or annually (at the end of a grade).

Specific, Measurable Outcome
The statement of a single, specific desired result from an intervention. To be measurable, the outcome should be expressed in observable and quantifiable terms (i.e. Johnny will demonstrate mastery of grade-level basic math calculation skills as measured by a score of 85% or better on the end-of the unit test on numerical operations).

Tertiary Level of Intervention
Tertiary intervention supplements primary and secondary interventions to intensify instruction (see intensive intervention). Tertiary level of intervention often occurs under the auspices of special education. Individualized education program (IEP) goals are established; individualized student programs are developed formatively using systematic progress monitoring; and student progress data are also used to determine when a student may return to secondary or primary prevention. Tertiary level of intervention is usually implemented individually or in very small groups.

Tiered Instruction
Tiered instruction describes levels of instructional intensity within a multi-tiered prevention system.

Tier One (Universal) Intervention

Tier I Interventions are those provided to all students in the classroom, regardless of individual needs (e.g. Bully proofing, Guided Reading, Every Day Math, 6-Traits Writing). These may be research-based, but are not necessarily prescriptive.

Tier Two (Targeted) Intervention

Tier II Interventions are to be implemented when assessment indicates that a student is not making adequate gains from universal instruction alone. They are generally smaller group interventions designed to meet the specific needs of a student and his/her peers with similar needs (e.g. Social skills training, Multi-sensory reading, or Knowing Mathematics).

Tier Three (Intensive) Intervention

Tier III Interventions are those which offer a student highly individualized, systematic and explicit instruction in an area of assessed need. Although the programs or strategies may be similar to those offered at Tier II, the intervention is reclassified as "intensive" if it is individualized to meet the needs of a particular student and the duration and/or intensity of the intervention is increased to accelerate student response.

Trend Line

A trend line is a line on a graph that represents a line of best fit through a student's data points. The trend line can be compared against the aimline to help inform responsiveness to intervention and to tailor a student's instructional program.

Universal Screening

Universal screening is conducted, usually as a first stage within a screening process, to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening tests are typically brief; conducted with all students at a grade level; and followed by additional testing or short-term progress monitoring to corroborate students' risk status.