Sustainability, Capacity, and Leadership for Fidelity of Implementation—What Is Needed to Realize RTI's Potential?

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Ultimate Objective of Change is Sustainability

Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, and Wallace (2005)

Of What Changes, What Remains?

- Sustainability requires vigilance and continued attention to support systems, starting with the exploration stage and continuing through the life of the innovation—Wallace, Blase, Fixsen, & Naoom, 2007
- Improvement in student performance is NOT sufficient to sustain change

3 Key & Interlocked Components to Sustainability

- Leadership
- Partnership
- Knowledge Capacity

Leadership

- State
  - Policy and Guidance
  - Law
- Building
  - Instructional support
  - Resources
  - Teacher

District

- Philosophical Indicators
- Research supported
- Staff

Partnership

- Administrators
- Parents
- Teachers
- Support Staff
- Student

1. Time and resources
2. Support for instruction
3. Communication
4. Research supported
5. Interventions
6. Data based decision making
7. Universal screening outcomes
8. Tiered interventions
9. Progress monitoring outcomes
10. Sustaining fidelity
11. Student outcomes
12. Effective Instructional Practices

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Knowledge Capacity and Practice

- Sustaining Personnel Changes
- Change in instructional knowledge base
- Training at Pre-service level

Stories – The Good - Change in Roles
Dr. Rita Bean, University of Pittsburgh

- Common Skills & Competencies
  - In-depth knowledge of literacy development and instruction
  - Data analysis and instructional matching skills
  - Differentiation of Instruction
  - Collaboration
  - Commitment to Life-Long Learning
- Distinct Skills & Competencies
  - Communication skills
  - Facility with Technology

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- Shared Leadership

Stories – The Not So Good
“RTI - The Failed Experiment”

- Failure to attend to core instruction
- Hiring of “interventionists”
- Emphasis only on tiered interventions to solve the problems

Sustainability Occurs When…

- FEASIBLE
  - Is defined by specific guidelines
  - Can be integrated with other teaching practices
  - Can be adapted to fit specific classroom needs
  - Aligns with state standards

- ONGOING SUPPORT IS PROVIDED
  - Promotes mastery of the practice or program over time
  - Discussions with colleagues provide opportunities to problem solve implementation issues as well as opportunities for support and feedback
  - Administrators or implementation coordinators support and promote continued implementation
  - All materials needed to effectively implement it are readily available

Sustainability Occurs When…

- Required Change for Teachers
  - Augments their skills—does not require them to learn a completely new set of skills
  - Engages their interest—does not overwhelm them with minor details
  - Addresses the needs of a wide range of students—does not target a small number of students

- Visible Benefits
  - Link improvements in student performance to the practice or program
  - Observe improvements for students with and without disabilities

- Student Enjoyment
  - The students find the practice or program engaging

- Conceptual Knowledge
  - Learn the underlying theory or principles behind the practice or program
  - Understand how the practice or program is affecting student performance
A leader is a person you will follow to a place you would not go by yourself.

Joel Barker, *Future Edge*