RTI Action Network Reports Strong Momentum and Results

More than 1.8 million educators reached through the RTI Action Network

September 30, 2009, Washington DC – With data now in from a full operational year of the RTI Action Network Web site (www.rtinetwork.org) and after completing a comprehensive study of those who have leveraged its content and services, the RTI Action Network is releasing its achievements while also recognizing there is still much to be done to help struggling learners succeed.

In addition to 250,000 visitors to the site from 165 countries, over 1.8 million educators and families received information and support to assist them with effective implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI).

The RTI Action Network is an initiative from the National Center for Learning Disabilities and is dedicated to the responsible and effective implementation of Response to Intervention nationwide. It is funded from a generous grant from the Cisco Foundation.

Results from the first year are organized under two categories:

Online Reach is Expanding; RTI Action Network Web site Receives High Marks

- Increasing levels of traffic came to the site—to date, over 250,000 unique visitors came to www.rtinetwork.org for training and information
- The site attracted global attention—visitors came from 165 countries
- 95% of visitors use the site information for one or more purposes
- 95% of visitors reported gaining knowledge from online content
- Over 1/3 of the educators who use the site leverage the materials to help families struggling with learning disabilities

Proactive Outreach Brings Information and Useful Tools to Educators and Families

- Strong ties with national education-based organizations resulted in reaching more than 1.8 million educators and families through online and print communications.
- The base of supporters grew, including 5,800 subscribers to the e-newsletter.
- National online forums were presented, with more than 1,500 sites from 15 countries around the world participating in live events with even more accessing the archives post-event.

"The survey data reinforce that the RTI Action Network is reaching critical audiences," said Dr. Kathleen Whitmire, Director of the RTI Action Network. "Every day, more and more people and organizations are seeing the positive impact these initiatives and tools can have on helping every child succeed."
RTI Gaining Momentum; Still Needs Support

In June of 2009, the results of another comprehensive RTI study were announced by Spectrum K12 School Solutions and leading education organizations including the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), and State Title 1 Directors.

Participants in the study were predominantly school administrators. While 71% of respondents indicated some level of RTI implementation in their districts, only 40% have had an RTI program for more than one year. Additionally, 87% of respondents identified insufficient teacher training as the biggest obstacle in implementing RTI. This indicates that for RTI to be implemented successfully there needs to be more support for districts in the early phases and more teacher training.

Collaborating with National Organizations: Providing Valuable Resources

The key to RTI Action Network’s success is its collaboration with seven founding partners and 17 implementation partners. It is through shared vision, dedicated execution, and strategic communication of relevant and timely programs that the group has been able to have such a strong impact. Frontline educators and administrators agree.

"The National Association of Elementary School Principals has benefited through the partnership with the RTI Action Network by providing our members with information and resources that we have found to be extremely accurate and reliable,” said Rich Barbacane, professional outreach associate and past president of NAESP.

According to Rich Long, director at the International Reading Association, “The RTI Action Network is extraordinarily valuable to the education community because it brings together people with very different ideas about how to implement RTI, and it provides a ground for us to come together, talk about our differences, but more importantly, find out that we’re actually closer together than we are apart.”

“My experiences with the RTI Action Network as a building principal have been positive. I find it beneficial for establishing a base level of knowledge and often use this resource to help my teachers gain a better understanding of RTI,” said Tom Komp, principal at Boulevard Elementary School in upstate New York. “I also use their materials for presentations to other principals and recommend it to them as a valuable resource.”

Moving forward, the RTI Action Network will continue to provide innovative tools and resources necessary to help teachers, administrators and families gain essential knowledge and experience in this important education initiative. In Phase II, the RTI Action Network will be launching and supporting new professional development opportunities, a Leadership Network and a range of other interactive Web 2.0 enabled capabilities. More information on the next phase of expansion for the RTI Action Network will be released shortly.

About the RTI Action Network

The RTI Action Network (www.rtinetwork.org) is a program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities and was funded by a generous grant from the Cisco Foundation. The RTI Action Network works in partnership with the nation’s leading education associations and top RTI experts to guide educators and families in the large-scale implementation of RTI so that each child has access to quality instruction and that struggling students – including those with learning disabilities – are identified early and receive the necessary supports to be successful.

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