

## Implementing RTI in High Schools

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### *About this Talk*

Implementing Rtl at the secondary level presents unique challenges and new questions. Join **Drs. Matthew Burns, Hollie Pettersson** and **Rebecca Sarlo** as they explore the application of multi-tiered systems of support in high school settings and answer your questions about key issues. They will also offer examples to illustrate the application of Rtl practices that increase student achievement for academics and behavior at the high school level.

### *Transcript*

**Q Paula Dean**

Please share some effective ways to schedule teacher collaboration regarding students who aren't successful in class.

**A Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

What we have learned is that there are minutes in every day that could be utilized more effectively. For example, our teachers' contract allows for 30 minutes before and after school. This was implemented years ago, pre-email and internet, to allow for parent interactions. However, it seems that parents are engaging with the staff electronically at higher rates than face to face.

So, we have created "late start" days where students come to school later than their teachers. During this time, teachers review data, discuss content maps, and plan for intervention, both in the class and in the day. Basically we have found 30 additional minutes in the day by adjusting start and end times for teachers.

**Q JoAnn Hiatt**

We have 50 minute periods 3 days a week and 90 minute periods 2 days a week, how could an RTI model look in traditional math courses of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Intermediate Algebra?

**A Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

The question that comes to mind is how are your students scheduled for these courses? Are students who have traditionally struggled in math during previous years scheduled FIRST to ensure that they get the supports that they need? Is your model one of remediation or pre-teaching? What supplemental services are available at your school?

We schedule our struggling students to be evenly spaced across courses and with our best teachers. This can be done in advance because we have a district-wide data system that helps us

**A** to identify who needs what additional support. Additionally, our teachers have time together weekly to plan for enrichment and intervention.

This is very valuable to the education of all of our students - including those who are historically unsuccessful and those who "miss a beat" during the academic year and need concept reviews.

**Q** **Alex Hildebrand**

How do high schools that are successfully implementing RtI identify the appropriate interventions at Tiers 2 and 3 for various subjects, and how is progress systematically monitored?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

They need to focus on reading and math skills. For reading, check out the [Florida Center for Reading Research website](#).

I suggest using the National Reading Panel's (NRP) 5 areas as the focus. Find an intervention for phonics (e.g., REWARDS), one for fluency (e.g., Six Minute Solution), one for vocabulary (e.g., Read On) and one for comprehension (e.g., Questioning the Author). I would not worry too much about phonemic awareness at the high school level. Math is addressed objective at a time. There are no math programs for different areas like there are for reading, but there are programs that focus on specific skills (e.g., Accelerated Math or Math Facts in a Flash) that could serve as Tier 2 interventions.

**Q** **Ernest Music**

What are the main concerns about implementing RtI in High School, especially in a school that already uses DI and full inclusion in their classes?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

Sounds like your school has some great, evidence-based practices in place. An administrative question that I would ask in your example would be "How are you preparing teachers to be flexible in their instruction?"

For example, full inclusion is a great ideal - but what do you do when a student requires more intensive instruction than the inclusionary setting allows? How will you extend the curriculum for those who may need enrichment? What mechanisms have you put in place to ensure flexibility in scheduling and, perhaps more importantly, teacher behaviors?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

DI and full inclusion provide fantastic bases from which to work. DI approaches are especially useful for Tier 2 and tier 3. Moreover, full inclusion provides a framework to free up special

**A** education personnel to deliver interventions.

I'm guessing that the main concern will be Tier 1. Make sure that you have universal screening data, that student performance data are being used to screen kids, and that effective instruction is occurring in Tier 1.

Also, working collaboratively as a team with content area teachers will make your efforts easier.

**Q** **Marti Voight**

Can you share examples of how high schools are scheduling to help support the student with low level math and reading skills?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

In our high schools, we have learned that when creating the master schedule it is essential to schedule for students who require intensive and supplemental interventions FIRST.

While a variety of options have been utilized and considered, currently, all four of our high schools are utilizing a 4x4 schedule. We have found that this schedule is great for some but not all students.

Therefore, we have scheduled "skinnies" where the student attends class daily to receive intervention for math or reading. In these intervention courses, the class size is smaller and the student can be exited at regular intervals.

These skinnies are for students who demonstrate low skill in key areas over-time. For those who may require intervention tied to the content of the school year, we have before and after school intervention times and what we call "concept mastery" every other day. During concept mastery students work with the content teacher to review, pre-teach, or extend the concepts taught during the week.

**Q** **Todd Bohm**

After two years of design and meetings, we implemented part of Tier 1 of our PBIS plan at D.C. Everest Sr High school in Schofield, WI. Our data numbers were fantastic and show great promise. However, as we move forward with implementation, we have struggled to find examples throughout the country of schools that have implemented a Tier 2 program at a school our size. We have approximately 1400 students in grades 10-12. Do you have any suggestions? Thank you

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

Identifying high schools with highly effective Tier 1 PBIS programs is challenging. Many high

**A** schools struggle with designing and implementing an effective Tier 1 PBIS program for several reasons, including fidelity of implementation issues, the selection of developmentally inappropriate reinforces (e.g., stamps, lunch with principal), and a focus on stopping inappropriate behavior rather than on teaching and encouraging more functional behavior.

With this said, two schools with successful Tier 1 PBIS programs and Tier 2 support programs come to mind. Both schools have done a great job of attending to critical implementation components. First of all, both schools have defined essential social-emotional skill that they want ALL of their students to have. This is a critical first step not only in implementing an effective Tier 1 PBIS program but also for designing Tier 2 supports that will support students in achieving the Tier 1 goals.

For instance, both schools set the goal that all students would possess the skills necessary to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults at school. To accomplish this goal, the schools provided all 9th grade students with social skills instruction specific to this goal (e.g., conflict resolution, asking for help, communication, etc.). Students who struggled with establishing and maintaining positive relationships with adults were assigned an adult mentor whose responsibilities included establishing a positive relationship with the student, reinforcing critical social skills, and assisting the student with conflict resolution.

This Tier 2 intervention did not require a change to the master schedule as the mentoring took place once a week during lunch at one school and during an existing home room period in the other school. Designing an effective Tier 2 program requires that we have thoroughly defined what we want students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of our Tier 1 PBIS program and then understanding what is getting in the way for students who do not respond sufficiently to the Tier 1 program.

Many Tier 2 PBIS supports at the high school level can be provided without changing the school's master schedule and include such things as peer and adult mentoring, support for goal setting with more frequent data chats and progress monitoring while others can be built into existing infrastructure (e.g., providing skill instruction during homeroom, advisory periods, or experience/elective courses).

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Unfortunately, there are not many examples. Chisago Lakes High School here in Minnesota does a great job and is not too far away. I work with several other high schools as well, but not in WI.

**Q** **Mary Ellen doValle**

What role do Special Education teachers play in the RTI process in the High School Learning Community? I have recently transferred from a Curriculum Coach's position in an elementary school environment to Special Ed teacher in a high school. There are no coaches in any of our schools, so the RTI process will definitely be everyone's concern. I don't want to overstep my

**Q** boundaries.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

This is a good question for your special education supervisor. Up to 15% of special education funds can be used for prevention and early intervention. Thus, some high schools have their special education teachers delivering Tier 2 interventions, which I think is fantastic. Special education teachers should at least be participating in data meetings and problem-solving team meetings (if your school does that).

I also think special education teachers are very good candidates to deliver Tier 3 interventions. Your question is an important one. We (including you) are much more concerned about kids than boundaries, but a conversation with your supervisor is probably a good idea.

**Q** **Patricia Drake**

Could you provide examples of unique and appropriate tools for progress monitoring at the high school level?

**A** **Hollie Petterson, Ph.D.**

Patricia, I am not sure what we are using could be classified as "unique" but here's our data set:

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) is utilized for all students in math K-8. This provides high schools with a data set demonstrating who is most at risk for failure academically.

For reading, we utilize CBM for all K-6th grade students. In 7th through 11th grades, we utilize the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). Students in the 7th through 11th grades who score below-basic (lexile level) on the SRI are then administered CBM oral reading fluency to ensure that they are in need of intervention. These data are used to plan for intervention and chart progress.

For content areas, we use district benchmarks and school-created common formative assessments.

We also utilize data on student attendance, student discipline, and student engagement.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

That is a great question. There are several options. Oral reading fluency is fine if you are implementing a code-based intervention. MAZE works especially well for comprehension.

Other measures such as Star Reading and Star Math can work well. I'm intrigued by common assessments to monitor progress. If your school has good common assessments, it would be easy to incorporate comprehension questions to those and use those data as part of the process.

**Q** *Wendy Stuttgen*

What do you use for universal screeners in high school? Currently, we are using AIMSweb for grades K-8, we but aren't sure what to use for high school.

**A** *Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.*

We currently use AIMSweb, as well. We also administer the ACT assessments to our 8th (EXPLORE), 10th (PLAN), and 11th (ACT) grade students. we use these data (CBM and ACT) to predict who may require additional supports (remediation and enrichment). We prioritize these data for scheduling and planning.

In addition to these data, we have district-created benchmarks that are tied to content courses. We also expect teachers and departments to implement formative assessment for students in content areas.

**A** *Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.*

The best "universal screener" for identifying at-risk students at the high school level is a systematic review of existing historical data. At the secondary level, we do not typically have to screen students to know who is at-risk for academic failure and disengagement. Students come to us with years of data which indicate that without intervention, these students are likely to experience course failures, continue to have skill deficits, and remain disengaged. So, I recommend developing a structured protocol for reviewing existing data to identify students in need of support. The earlier that high schools can receive information from feeder middle school regarding their incoming students the better. Earlier identification can help schools in their development of a data-informed master schedule.

The time and personnel energy saved on screening can be re-allocated conduct diagnostic assessments which are necessary to design effective intervention plans and progress monitoring assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of programming.

[Download this example assessment plan.](#)

**Q** *Kim Riley*

How does technology enhance the implementation of RTI in the high school setting? Why should it be used?

**A** *Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.*

Technology is a high school's best friend, if implemented appropriately. Obviously, we use technology to collect, plot, and analyze data. In addition, technology can be a powerful tool for enhancing student engagement.

**A** Our schools have open networks and students are encouraged to bring their own devices. We also use online delivery mechanisms to recapture credit and award original credit. Finally, technology has become an essential tool for adult communication and professional development enhancements.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Technology is used for one reason - it makes things easier. Good data-management systems are very important. You could pull off a good RTI system without a data-management program, but it certainly makes it easier.

Technology-based assessments can greatly enhance the technical adequacy of the data (e.g., Star Reading) and allow teachers to assess the kids without sitting down with them one on one. Finally, interventions can be computer delivered which makes it possible to do a good intervention with 20 or 30 kids.

HOWEVER, technology enhanced approaches to intervention are not instruction. They are ways to practice what the teacher teaches. Things like Accelerated Math, Math Facts in a Flash, Study Island, etc. can certainly be a solid component of the intervention system, but is only a part of it.

**Q** **Kim Riley**

How will implementing RTI at Title I high schools specifically improve school climate?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

In my opinion, effective Rtl implementation incorporates academic and social behavior talk within a coaching/supportive framework. Everyone benefits because the dialogue is focused on student achievement. Schoolwide, systematic efforts are developed and supported because the mindset is simple -- "we are all in this together."

Schools are engaged in important conversations about expectations for both adults and students in an effectively implemented Rtl system. Coming together with real purpose can be galvanizing for a staff, creating a climate of collegiality and results. Additionally, students (including student leaders) can contribute much to the dialogue in an Rtl structure.

**Q** **Peggy Gutierrez**

With so many intervention programs out there, do you recommend a program that takes place during the school day or after school?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

Peggy, I wish we had had better success with before and after school options - but we have not.

**A** High school students are mobile and motivated to be somewhere other than in intervention classes...

So, we have embedded the interventions in the day for reading a math. For enrichment, we have found that before and after school offerings are somewhat successful - but for our most vulnerable learners - we schedule for their needs during the academic day.

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

Without a doubt during the school day intervention programs are typically more successful than after school programs. Even the most well designed after school program is unlikely to garner sufficient attendance from students to accomplish its goals.

Intervention programs that are scheduled during the school day, on the other hand, can be directive--meaning that we can require and more closely monitor student engagement. The only time I have seen after school programs achieve any consistent student attendance occurred when staying after school for intervention was mandatory. In Florida, the state law allows schools to require after school tutoring for students who are nonproficient readers as long as they are provided with transportation home afterwards.

Even this scenario, however, resulted in lower student attendance rates than could have been achieved with during the school day intervention time.

**Q** **Kelly**

What is the teacher's role? While a student may need more than one content-area teacher to be involved, how in-depth is the teacher's responsibility?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

The content area teachers are integral to the successful team. I'm often surprised about how often the content area teachers are left out of the loop. We usually have the teachers receive all of the screening data for students in their class.

It would be ideal to have them participate in team meeting, but if that is not possible, then all must at least get the data so that they know who is having trouble accessing the curriculum because of poor reading skills. We then identify a list of interventions from which they can choose to support the Tier 2 interventions. These are usually quick, easy tasks like preteaching vocabulary.

Of course, some RTI models use content area teachers or courses to deliver Tier 2 interventions, which is a different conversation.

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

**A** The teachers' role is critical within an RTI framework. First and foremost, the teacher is charged with providing highly effective (i.e., effective for at least 80% of students) instruction and for providing differentiated instruction to address the specific needs of students (e.g., comprehension support for students who lack the reading skills to comprehend grade-level texts). Designing instruction in a way that allows students to feel and be successful in the courses is critical.

Beyond providing core instruction, teachers also have a responsibility to communicate with intervention providers regarding what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do as a result of core instruction and what is getting in the way of achieving these goals for students. This information will allow intervention teachers to design instruction which aligns and is integrated with core instructional goals.

Thirdly, teachers are responsible for collecting formative assessment data which allows them and others (e.g., leadership team) to evaluate the impact of instruction on student outcomes.

**Q** **Chris Medenwaldt**  
Can you point me to some empirical research on RTI in high schools. Particularly evidence regarding professional development and leadership?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**  
There is not much research yet that tests the effectiveness of RTI at a high school. Sharon Vaughn was lead author on a great study with a middle school (see below). Also, there is some solid research on professional development. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) did a fantastic study, the reference for which is below.

- Sharon Vaughn, Paul T. Cirino, Jeanne Wanzek, Jade Wexler, Jack M. Fletcher, Carolyn D. Denton, Amy Barth, Melissa Romain, and David J. Francis (2010). *Response to Intervention for Middle School Students With Reading Difficulties: Effects of a Primary and Secondary Intervention*. *School Psychology Review*, 39, 3-21.
- Michael S. Garet, Andrew C. Porter, Laura Desimone, Beatrice F. Birman, Kwang Suk Yoon. (2001). *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 38, pp. 915-945

**Q** **Denise Dvorak**  
Any advice on how to manage progress monitoring with content teachers?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**  
Denise, this is a great question and one that our schools have struggled with in Canyons. Here's what we have learned:

1. Prioritization of key access skills is a must. That means that we utilize historical data from the

- A** middle and elementary schools to determine who is most at risk prior to their entering the high school setting. We use typical screening tools in reading, writing, and math K-8.
2. High school content area teachers require scope and sequences to determine critical junctures in the skill progressions.
  3. Common formative assessment must be structured (we like Stiggins' work to guide this process) to yield data that is usable across settings
  4. Technology is the Rtl process's best friend to organize data for problem analysis and progress monitoring
  5. Teachers must not be shackled to only using common assessments or district benchmarks - they need encouragement to do daily checks for understanding and adjustments in their instruction.

I think John Hattie said it best in his excellent book Visible Learning:

?The major message is simple?what teachers do matters? the greatest source of variance in our system relates to teachers? When professionals see learning occurring or not occurring, they intervene in calculated and meaningful ways to alter the direction of learning to attain various shared, specific, and challenging goals (Hattie, 2009 p.22).?

Assessment should enable teachers to "intervene in calculated and meaningful ways" at regular intervals... this is Rtl!!!!

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Make it easy!!!! That is why technology enhanced assessments are so useful; the teacher only needs to find time and provide a computer. If that is not an option, then give them everything that they need and support them. In fact, I rarely have content area teachers monitor progress for Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions unless they are delivering the interventions.

**Q** **Denise**

What are some creative ways to implement Tier 2 interventions in a tight, high school schedule? What can be done with those who are on the high achievement end? Seems we focus on the students needing Tier 2 and 3 supports and not enough on those meeting and especially exceeding standards!

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

I often find that providing tiered intervention supports for high school students often begins with refining and aligning our existing intervention programs with core instruction. For instance, many of my schools provide a remedial math course for students who scored below proficient on the state's math assessment.

Although this is fairly standard practice, most of the schools have historically achieved less than desirable outcomes from the courses for a few key reasons. First of all, the courses were often

**A** viewed as a stand-alone course and not as a support for student success within their core math course. As a result, many students who were enrolled in math intervention simultaneously failed their math course, which resulted in them becoming off-track for graduation.

Worse yet, a significant portion of the students also failed their math intervention course! When asked what the purpose of the course was, intervention teachers most often reported that the course existed so that students "passed the FCAT." Most were unaware that many of their students were currently failing their core math course and that the purpose of all intervention is to support student success within core.

Many were unaware of what their students were expected to know, understand, and be able to do as a result of core instruction or what was preventing their students from being successful in core. As a result, the intervention teachers were unable to support their students' success within the core math course. They also lacked a way of accurately evaluating the impact of their instruction over time because the criteria for success was defined as "passing the FCAT" and the FCAT is administered in late Spring semester and scores are often not released until summer.

Providing guidance, support, and time for core math teachers and intervention teachers to unpack standards together, communicate frequently, and co-plan instruction will go a long way to improve the effectiveness of this already existing intervention. Thus, look for opportunities to use already existing supports more effectively before looking to add additional supports. Also, consider providing intervention as a credit generating elective courses, which will provide students the opportunity to progress toward graduation while receiving necessary support.

**Q Pam Stein**

Describe some effective scheduling/service models for providing additional supports for students in reading (at the high school level).

**A Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Scheduling is both the biggest challenge and advantage of RTI at the secondary level. There are a few commonly used models.

1. Provide a 20-30 minute daily homeroom in which targeted interventions occur for some students,
2. Use a remediation course, 30 minutes of which are dedicated to targeted intervention.
3. Co-teach a content area course (e.g., Social Studies) in which an interventionist works with students for half of the time to deliver targeted interventions with content area material (e.g., comprehension strategies with the social studies book).

There are other creative options as well. Each of these has advantages and disadvantages that I cannot get into adequately here. Just remember the critical components - flexible grouping,

**A** targeted interventions, and frequently monitoring progress.

**Q** *Chrissy Jones*

How do you get high school personnel to move beyond their belief systems to meet the needs of students?

**A** *Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.*

Helping school personnel to understand the interaction between instruction, curriculum, and environmental variables and student engagement and academic outcomes is key to building consensus with high school educators.

I have found that many of the buy-in issues regarding the implementation of multi-tiered student supports come from a belief that students "should already" possess the skills and desire to fully engage in the learning process and achieve academically. It is our job as leaders in our schools to help others understand that it is in everyone's best interest that we action plan around whether or not students "are" or "are not engaged" and whether or not the students "do" or "do not have specific skills" and move past whether or not the students "should" have the skills already.

Equally important, we must help educators to understand how the things they have the most control over (i.e., instruction, curriculum, and environment) impact student engagement and academic outcomes. This information will help to empower educators to make changes to meet the needs of students and achieve better outcomes. Without this information and support to make the changes, high school educators are likely to blame students (e.g., "students are unmotivated") or their families (e.g., "parents don't value education") for less than desirable outcomes rather than seek solutions.

**A** *Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.*

High school teachers need three things, in my experience:

1. A compelling WHY - we use the model presented by [Simon Sinek in his TED talk](#) to start this dialogue:
2. Opportunities to learn effective practices and receive feedback on their use of the practices - accountability
3. Success - both qualitative and quantitative evidence of their effect on student learning Until they have these 3 pieces, I have encountered strong resistance. After they have these 3 pieces, I have found that it is my job to step aside and organize the environment for their innovation and evidence-based approaches - because they are bound and determined to reach all students. Beliefs can change...

**Q** *Ivette Garcia*

**Q** When and how are Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports provided at the secondary level for the students who need more than the Tier 1 supports?

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention supports are most effective when they are provided as part of the school day. One strategy for providing tiered support is to schedule an intervention/enrichment period into the master schedule.

This time can be used for Tier 2 intervention, Tier 3 intervention, as well as for enrichment opportunities for students who are not in need of intervention. Another approach is to build intervention services into credit-generating elective courses.

For instance, in Florida, there are more than 10 elective courses which could be used for intervention purposes such as Critical Thinking; Personal, School, and Career Development; Reading for College Success.

**Q** **Ivette Garcia**  
How would Rtl support gifted or highly capable students that are not meeting the expected standards?

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

Although we sometimes get caught up in viewing Rtl as a means of school improvement and addressing the needs of our struggling learners, it is important for us to remember that Rtl is really about maximizing the outcomes of ALL learners. Thus, the Rtl framework can and should be utilized to meet the needs of gifted or highly capable learners as well as struggling learners. Two examples come to mind here.

First, in Florida a significant portion of a high school's grade is determined by the percent of students who are enrolled in and successfully complete advanced coursework (i.e., IB, AICE, AP, and Dual Enrollment). The inclusion of acceleration into the high school's grades has been greatly beneficial in that it has encouraged schools to build stronger pipelines to advanced courses, enroll students in advanced courses which may have not been challenged in this way in the past, and provide support services to ensure student success in the advanced coursework (e.g., AVID).

A second example also comes to mind. One of the districts in which I do a lot of work is struggling to meet the needs of their gifted learners. As a result, less of the district's gifted learners score within the highly proficient range (i.e., 4 or 5) on the state assessment than anywhere else in the state. It is just as important to problem solve this problem as it is to problem solve around the needs of nonproficient students.

**Q** *Ivette Garcia*

How often should staff conduct progress monitoring screenings? Should we check students' progress after a certain number of sessions or weeks?

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*

Within Tier 2, progress should be monitored at least every other week. Tier 3 usually relies on weekly progress monitoring. There is nothing magical about the time frame, except the more data the more reliable the decision.

My colleague Ted Chris does quite a bit of research in this area and has found that until you get about 8 data points, using high quality assessment procedures, your data are too unreliable to make decisions.

Therefore, the more frequently you collect data the faster you'll be able to adequately judge student progress.

**Q** *Ivette Garcia*

How do we fit and address the needs of the unmotivated learner within RtI?

**A** *Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.*

Re-engaging disengaged secondary students is one of the most challenging and important tasks secondary educators face. By the time students enter secondary schools, most failed learners are disengaged and most chronically disengaged learners are now failed learners.

The combination of skill deficits plus low productivity and engagement places students at significant risk for eventual dropout. With this said, there is much that can be done to prevent disengagement and to respond to it when it occurs. Student engagement is a multi-dimensional construct and as a result, intervention plans to address disengagement will likely need to be multi-dimensional as well.

For instance, many students become disengaged from school because they lack a peer group at school, a sense of belonging, or positive relationships with their teachers. If these conditions are the source of the student's disengagement than the appropriate intervention plan would involve helping the student to establish friendships, become involved at school (e.g., extra-curricular participation), or establish a mentoring relationship with at least one adult at school. Other students become disengaged from school because they lack a future orientation, an understanding of the relevance of school and school work, or feel as if they are not competent enough or not in control of their school success.

If these factors are the source of disengagement, then the interventions would need to focus on

- A** helping the student to develop long term career goals, set goals, understand the relevance of school to achieving his/her goals, and progress monitor his/her progress toward his/her goals.

Like any issue, the more we understand about the root causes (through problem analysis) of the disengagement, the more effective our intervention plans are likely to be. Check out "*Best Practices for Fostering Student Engagement*" (Christenson, Reschly, Appleton, Berman-Young, Spanjers, & Varrro, 2008) in *Best Practices in School Psychology* (5th Ed.) for more information on this topic.

- Q** **Verlinda Angell**  
How do you change HS cultures to accept small group implementation and grading differentiation?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

Wow, this is really the crux of what MUST happen in RtI settings at all levels. We have found that what sometimes looks like resistance is often lack of familiarity and understanding. The two biggest levers that we have used to help change the culture in favor of differentiation are the following:

1. Professional development that includes peer coaching and an external coaching component that is structured and consistent.
2. Use of data to chart progress and mark successes.

As a former high school English language arts teacher, I realized that many of my colleagues were uncomfortable with the standards-based and accountability movements. At first, I thought it was because it was a perceived threat to their autonomy. Over the years I have learned that most times the discomfort can be attributed to a lack of belief in the ability of teachers to truly change the learning trajectory of their secondary students.

Once a teacher, department, or faculty experiences success, they are more likely to believe that success can happen again. This increases the acceptance of professional development and shifted ways of instructing and interacting with students.

**Q** **Sandy Beery**

I serve a community school that is an alternative high school. Many students are credit deficient and have met years of academic failure in traditional schools. The students can receive daily tutoring and interventions as a normal part of their day. How much documentation for RTI, if a disability is suspected, is needed if all students are initially tested for reading level, coursework is geared to their academic levels and the staff is maintaining reading progress (Standard Reading Inventory) and/or daily coursework records?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

I love alternative high schools - the flexibility, the focus, the teachers, and the kids are so much fun. Most alternative high schools act as a systematic Tier 2 and 3.

However, they usually are not terribly systematic and often times not targeted. The focus has to be on credit recovery, but there also needs to be highly targeted interventions within the day. Moreover, the Standard Reading Inventory (SRI) is probably not a good tool to monitoring progress because you cannot administer it frequently enough and informal reading inventories tend to be very unreliable (different conversation).

I suggest using a tool like oral reading fluency (ORF) or MAZE as well, but to use your SRI and coursework records too. The question of documentation is one that should be answered by reading your state guidelines. Most states have very explicit requirements for documentation.

**Q** **Lindsay Parker**

If you were to chose to implement one essential (key) component of Rtl at the Secondary level for the purpose of focusing our efforts, what would it be and why?

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

The most essential key component for Rtl at the secondary school level is problem solving skills. Ensuring that secondary educators have the skills to accurately identify problems utilizing data, analyze problems to understand the root causes of the problems, select and implement instruction/interventions to address the root causes, and monitor the impact of instruction/intervention over time is essential.

Of course, problem solving is unlikely to be utilized effectively without sufficient time built in for team collaboration. So, time for problem solving is also critical.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

I suggest a few related things. First, get your teachers meeting on a consistent basis to examine data and use those data to improve core instruction.

I also would recommend using Tier 1 interventions where needed (e.g., High School Peer Assisted Learning Strategies) as part of that process. In other words, if I have to pick one thing, it will always always be Tier 1.

However, a solid Tier 2 is a good place to move next and if you have good core instruction in place, then I would focus on Tier 2.

**Q****Lisa**

What is your suggested counselor to student ratio in order to have successful implementation of RTI strategies?

**A****Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

Our state has a ridiculously high counselor to student ratio that precludes counselors from playing as strong of a role in the Rtl process as they would like. So, I am going to answer this firmly rooted in reality - we are probably never going to see ideal ratios for counselors, psychologists, and teachers.

What we can do, when faced with this reality is utilize the collective power of our schools through deliberate decisions (as opposed to reactionary management) for the use of personnel. We must prune whatever we can from the responsibility tree for our school personnel.

For example, our school counselors participate in scheduling decisions but the responsibility lies with administration to "build a board" and plan for intervention time. This affords counselors more time to guide students and review student achievement and behavioral data.

**Q****Cynthia Baranowski**

In many schools, reading is not a class available for juniors and seniors and sometimes reading specialists on not part of the staff. In those cases, who would be the interventionist?

**A****Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

We do not have interventionists at the secondary level in our district. We also have large class sizes. This has forced us to become innovative.

I firmly believe that our content area teachers have a duty to support literacy in their areas but I am realistic in thinking that they are NOT reading specialists. We have a cadre of English Language Arts (ELA) teachers that we support with professional development and coaching to provide skills-based reading classes.

These teachers had to learn some new skills in order to deliver high yielding practices for struggling readers in the secondary setting. We did an analysis of their CBM data and found that they are having a great effect.

**A****Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

That depends on how the school is set up. Sometimes we do a homeroom and the homeroom teacher does the intervention with a highly scripted program (e.g., REWARD, Six Minute Solution, etc.).

**A** Sometimes we deliver tier 2 interventions within a content area like Social Studies and we either have the teacher deliver it, a paraprofessional, a special education teacher, or a different co-teacher. There is also the possibility of peer tutoring and community volunteer programs.

**Q** **Patricia LaMonica**

In a departmentalized schedule how was communication about the RtI Process initiated? Besides English/Language Arts and Mathematics, were other departments onboard with aspects of implementation?

**A** **Hollie Petterson, Ph.D.**

Patricia, this is an excellent question and I can add that the commitment at our schools was somewhat surprising. We found that some of the departments (e.g. science and social studies) were equally if not more committed to the process as their peers in the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math departments.

What we are in the process of doing is helping all high school departments develop robust data sets and protocols for dialogue related to student progression.

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

In Florida, we have found that the best way to build consensus with all educators at the school is through the implementation of an Early Warning System. Early Warning Systems identify students with universal indicators (e.g., course failures, attendance, discipline referrals, GPA, Credits) and, as a result, all educators at the school play an equally important, albeit differing, role in ensuring that students graduate successfully from high school with real options after graduation. For instance, course failure in culinary arts is as detrimental in terms of GPA and credit accrual as failing math or English.

Also, elective course teachers begin to see themselves as integral to enhancing student engagement in school, which is essential to maximizing student outcomes. In the same vein, support staff (e.g., guidance counselors, school psychologists, and social workers) begin to see their roles and responsibilities as aligned with the overall mission of the school (i.e., full option graduation) as they work to support students' social-emotional skills.

**Q** **Michaela Duggan**

How can parents be included when implementing RTI in High Schools? It seems like parent involvement would be especially difficult in high school interventions.

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

Like in elementary settings, parent involvement is important at the high school level. There are,

**A** however, differences in what parent involvement "looks like" between elementary schools and high schools. While we are accustomed to defining parent involvement as parents coming to school, participating in school events, and actively communicating with teachers to solve issues, we may need to establish a different definition of parent involvement within the high school setting.

As students develop, it is normal and healthy for parents to take on less of a directive role and more of a consultative role in their child's lives and education. For instance, parent involvement at the high school level often involves parents helping a student learn to advocate for his/her self rather than coming to the school to address an issue.

One of the most important roles parents can play is to help their student develop college and/or career goals, understand what it will take to accomplish those goals, and monitor the student's progress toward the goals. Thus, allowing parents to be fully involved typically includes providing them with on-going information about their child's goals, relevancy of coursework, and progression toward achieving the goals. Ready access to their child's academic and engagement (e.g., attendance, discipline, work completion) data will greatly enhance parents' ability to be involved and supportive of their child's education.

**Q** ***Sherri Gould***

Our high school follows a block schedule: (3) 80-minute periods and (1) 100-minute period to accommodate a 20-minute lunch each day. We're struggling with how to implement an intervention time within the day. What models exist for us to review?

**A** ***Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.***

I have seen a few different approaches to building intervention time into a block schedule. Most of the approaches involve building a "skinny" period into the school day by borrowing a few minutes from each class period.

Another approach is to schedule a "Zero" period into the school day to take advantage of the time students are at school before 1st period. Also, many successful schools are paying very close attention to how they schedule students into their existing schedule.

For instance, they are working hard to design master schedules within which struggling students have smaller classes and more personnel support for their core courses and elective courses become intervention courses for students who need supplemental instruction.

**Q** ***Sherri Gould***

There seem to be few universal screens for high school students. We're considering using AIMSweb, which only goes to grade 8, to identify students who should be followed more closely. Your

**Q** thoughts?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

This is a problem that we are grappling with as well. However, we have recognized that the screening data from elementary and middle schools is very predictive of students' level of risk at the high school. So, we use the data from the previous school settings to determine those who are most at risk. We then progress monitor the sub-section of students (i.e. those who are most at risk) using CBM.

After we consider screening data for important access skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, then we focus on content assessments. These assessments are district or teacher created and tied to our state standards. We highly encourage use of the work of Stiggins' and colleagues as their model has been the best (of those we have tried) to yield usable and meaningful data.

**Q** **Margaret**

What is the outcome and the intent of RTI?

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

The outcome and intent of Rtl is to maximize the academic and social-emotional outcomes of ALL students. At a minimum this would mean that we provide instruction and intervention matched to student needs so that all students have the skills necessary to be full option graduates, meaning they can enter college, a living-wage career, or join the military following high school graduation.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

To systematically use data to efficiently allocate resources to enhance learning for all students.

**Q** **Delia laing**

What are the roles of the special education teacher, speech-language pathologist, and social worker in the Rtl process at the high school level?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Itinerate staff are very important. School psychologists are important members of data teams, as are special education teachers. Speech-language pathologists can help run Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, especially for vocabulary and comprehension.

The social worker sometimes serves as the problem-solving facilitator within a Tier 3 problem-solving team. These are all just ideas and I'm sure there are many more, but itinerate staff are important.

**Q** *Darryl Gates*

If possible, please give a chronological list of "first steps" that a school should take to implement RTI, including roles of responsible people.

**A** *Hollie Petterson, Ph.D.*

We follow the steps or phases recommended by the [National Association of State Directors of Special Education \(NASDSE\) blueprint document](#).

This process includes garnering consensus (which we have made a minor tweak in the vocabulary to call COMMITMENT), building infrastructure and delivering implementation. The first step is to establish a compelling why and build a building leadership team. We established guidelines and routinely provide schools with training as to how efficient building leadership teams perform.

[Download an example of building leadership team composition and tasks.](#)

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*

Here is what I recommend:

**Step 1** - establish your universal screening system. Be it Early Warning Signs, a measure, or a combination of the two.

**Step 2** - get your teachers meeting to discuss data If all you accomplish in year 1 is step 1 and 2, then you've had a great year.

**Step 3** - plan for your Tier 2 interventions that and a system to target the interventions to student needs.

**YEAR 2**

**Step 4** - get your Tier 2 system in place.

**Step 5** - train your staff in the problem solving process and plan for Tier 3-level problem analysis (often with a problem-solving team).

**YEAR 3**

**Step 6** - start your Tier 3 system.

**YEAR 4**

**Step 7** - thoroughly assess your Rtl system. Ed Shapiro wrote a great article about how to do that, which was published in Assessment for Effective Intervention (I think Clements is the lead author and Ed is second author). Also, the implementation checklists mentioned in earlier posts are helpful.

**Step 8** - tweak your model to accommodate for the needs of your unique system.

**Q** *Dr. Eileen Marzola*

What are the top three resources you would recommend to administrators trying to begin with RTI in their high schools?

**A** *Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.*

1) Use school personnel more flexibly. View school personnel's roles and responsibilities as variable, meaning that they are dependent on the needs of students. The key questions here are "What do our students need?" and "Who do we have that can provide that type of support?"

2) See time as variable. Ensure that the master schedule is developed with a thorough understanding of students needs in mind. Instead of hoping that the schedule meets the needs of students, strive to design a master schedule that devotes more time and personnel support where the students need the time and support most.

3) Provide time for collaborative problem solving to occur on a regular basis. The most powerful resource that a school has is the collective capacity of the educators within it.

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*

Quality core instruction. Joe Torgesen wrote a very useful guide for principals that you can get for free: [Improving Literacy Instruction in Middle and High Schools](#).

Stiggins has very good information about assessment that you can find by googling stiggins assessment for learning. Finally, go to the [IES website](#) for practice guides for a bunch of good info.

**Q** *Delia laing*

What are some successful high school models? Would the Kansas University model SIMS be considered a Tier 1 schoolwide intervention model?

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*

It could be. However, I think SIMS is a better tier 2 intervention. I recommend identifying students who struggle with comprehension (and that it is not decoding or fluency) and implementing SIMS for those students. That would be more manageable and probably helpful.

Check out the [Florida Center for Reading Research website](#) for other intervention ideas.

**Q** *Delia laing*

How do you reconcile when students are re-evaluated at the high school level and do not qualify

**Q** under the new criteria for SLD the cost of interventions that still need to be maintained for student success?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

I'm hope that I'm understanding your question. We just about always write a transition plan from Tier 3 to Tier 2 or Tier 2 to Tier 1, thus we would write a plan for special education to Tier 3.

However, the question that I think you are asking is a bit more complicated. Believe it or not, the situation that I think you are describing is one reason why a student is identified as SLD within RTI. If a student is experiencing success, but the intervention is too intense to continue in general education, then that student is identified as SLD under an RTI model.

The true path to LD within RTI is student success NOT student failure. Most districts are not ready for that, but most (if not all) states allow for it. So, if I'm understanding your question, then the situation should not happen.

**Q** **Delia laing**  
What is the role of Section 504 in the Rtl process?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Section 504 is used when a student is suspected as or regarded as having a disability. It is a civil rights law that is designed to protect students' right to a free and appropriate public education, or at least to keep them from not receiving one because of discrimination based on a disability.

I suggest using a 504 plan if there is a concern that the intervention will not happen or if the student tends to move a lot. However, talk to your district personnel. My guess is that they'll recommend against it because it provides an extra layer of protection.

It is quite easy to identify the kid as "eligible" for 504 if they are receiving a targeted intervention (Tier 2 and 3), but not needed if they are receiving the intervention unless you worry that it could end for some reason other than it no longer being needed.

**Q** **Laura Kuhlenbeck**  
What are some of the research based interventions that have been identified to assist struggling readers at the high school level?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

**Phonics** - REWARDS

**Fluency** - Six Minute Solution

**A** **Comprehension** - Questioning the Author

There are many good interventions. What matters most is that the interventions are correctly targeted. In other words, using Six Minute Solution with a student who can't decode will be a waste of time. I also highly recommend the [High School Peer Assisted Learning Strategies](#) model as a Tier 2 or even Tier 1 intervention.

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

We have implemented skills-based reading courses for our secondary students. We follow a standard protocol for identification and intervention (see graphic for diagnostic plan). The interventions, which have yielded high results within our district and in others, are:

- Rewards (which addresses decoding multi-syllabic words)
- Six-Minute Solutions (which builds fluency reading connected text)
- Signature Reading (an intervention for improving vocabulary, comprehension, content area reading and meta-cognitive strategies)

**Q** **Matthew**

Is RTI an appropriate method to respond to students with attendance problems? Or will developing a contract or BIP with the student be the place to start? Or... is the actual development of a contract or BIP with the student a Tier 1 intervention?

**A** **Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.**

RtI is appropriate for addressing any and all problems including engagement issues, academic skill deficits, and operational issues. For instance, we know that who miss more than approximately 20% of the school year are at significant risk for becoming off-track for graduation and school dropout. With this in mind, schools should strive to ensure that students are attending school at least 80% of the time.

So, if a school finds that 35% of its students have significant attendance issues than would be a gap between what is expected (100%) and what the school is getting (65%). This is the identified problem and should be addressed at a tier 1 level. Next the team would want to identify barriers to consistent school attendance (i.e., Problem Analysis) and design and implement intervention supports which address the barriers.

Finally, the school would need to evaluate the impact of the attendance interventions over time by asking and answering, "Our we closing the gap between the expected percentage of students consistently attending (80%)and the baseline level (65%)(i.e., program evaluation).

The initiation of a behavior intervention plan would likely represent a tier 3 intervention in that it

**A** would be produced through an individual problem solving process. Likewise, attendance contracts are likely to be a tier 2 intervention if they are used to address the needs of some (no more than 20%) of students or a tier 3 intervention if the intervention was designed as part of an individual problem solving process and are utilized with a few students (no more than 5%).

**Q** **Ramona Chauvin**

How does RTI really work in secondary schools where Carnegie units "rule"?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

Ramona, We are fortunate that our state allows for some flexibility in awarding credit. We have two great options:

1. Districts can award credit based on competencies
2. Districts can award credit based on blended learning opportunities (e.g. online courses)

We prioritize graduation requirements for our efforts during the academic day. We have created some unique schedules - where students alternate dates and times to get all of it in. We have also identified students who are at-risk due to their credit and attendance patterns. With these students, we provide more intensive guidance from the counselor and plan for more opportunities to access credit eligible options.

For the past two years, we have held a summer semester for original credit. These courses are taught by our most skilled and engaging teachers and we prioritize those credits that are required for graduation. This has shifted the paradigm a bit to get kids looking at "getting ahead" as opposed to using summer as a remediation process.

Our Federal Programs Director also implemented a really novel approach this summer where she focused on students who were learning English. She then provided intensive professional development for our teachers who were seeking ESL endorsements. These courses were taught, literally, next door to one another at our summer semester location. This afforded the teachers an authentic opportunity to try high yielding practices with kids. It also afforded our students the opportunity to earn credit and work closely with teachers.

**Q** **Kathy Francoeur**

What are some good evidence-based literacy and math interventions and supports to provide once students are not responding to the Tier 1 supports and resources that have been tried at that level?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

I recommend REWARDS for decoding, Six Minute Solution for fluency and Read On for vocabulary,

**A** and Questioning the Author for comprehension. Check out the [Florida Center for Reading Research website for reading](#).

Math is more difficult, but in some ways easier. Many students who struggle with math lack basic fact fluency. Math Facts in a Flash is a great intervention for that, but are others that you can do that do not cost anything. Go to [Intervention Central website](#) for math ideas.

**Q** **Holly Lu**

What approach(es) do you recommend for a high school student who requires Tier 3 intervention in reading comprehension?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Kansas Strategy instructional model is good, Read On is good, and there are others (see the earlier posts about the FCRR). However, I also encourage you to find information on reciprocal teaching and using that as the basis for a tier 3 model to teach predicting, clarifying, generating questions, and summarizing.

See [Reciprocal Teaching: A Reading Comprehension Package on the Intervention Central](#) website for more information.

**Q** **Carol Oberg**

Can you describe how the RtI process is used with students with IEPs?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

This is a great question. If the student's IEP is not in reading (e.g., EBD or math LD) then the process progress as usual. However, I can tell you from experience that when the RTI model is up and running, then about 66% of the students with an IEP in reading wind up being served in Tier 2. If that is the case, then there are several possibilities. First, if your state/district allow for consultation, then we write in consultation as the service. Second, sometimes the special education teacher delivers the Tier 2 intervention and that can meet the requirement. We also have had parents decline services. That way we do not have to reassess if we want to start up special education services. Finally, if the student receives any special education service (e.g., SLP), then you are fine. However, I strongly recommend that you discuss this with your special education supervisors. Everything I just discussed is allowable in federal law, but state regulations and district policies can differ.

**Q** **Carol Oberg**

**Q** How do you use RtI for behavior issues?

**A** **Hollie Pettersson, Ph.D.**

The same ways we do for academic issues... but more specifically, we follow the PBIS model for implementation and have done much work to connect the dots between behavior and academic core instruction, supplemental and intensive practices. At the high school level, it is important to ensure that core instruction for behavior is well defined and consistently implemented. Schools must do the following - and in my experience, in this order:

1. Establish social/behavioral expectations and procedures - utilizing student leaders
2. Plan for and explicitly teach the expectations and procedures (all teachers, all students, no excuses)
3. Plan for reinforcement and evaluation of the effectiveness of core instruction (1 and 2)
4. Systematic correction of behavioral errors - including reteaching and pre-teaching for those who require a bit more

Commitment is established, the infrastructure is build (including a communication mechanism for the school - e.g. building leadership team), and interventions are selected and implemented based on the school and student data.

**Q** **Jason Mitchell**

What is the recommended tier model for high schools? We are exploring a model that has in-class monitoring at Tier I, pull-out small group instruction at Tier II, and special ed. at Tier III.

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

That sounds great, except you need something between Tier 2 and special education. Tier 3 is a general education service not special education. Tier 1 and 2 sound great. Just make sure that there is quality instruction in Tier 1 and correctly targeted interventions in Tier 2.

However, I suggest individualized interventions for Tier 3. Often times we develop those with a problem-solving team, but PSTs are often not as effective at the secondary level. Thus, some schools have resorted to a very intense intervention program for Tier 3 (e.g., Corrective Reading).

**Q** **Anna Harms**

Can you provide any examples of systematic ways to collect data and conduct universal screening at the high school level besides the Early Warning System?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Many schools use Measures of Academic Progress for Reading and/or Math. Star Math and Star

**A** Reading are good too. Some use MAZE because it is much much much cheaper.

However, the data associated with an early warning system are important to consider. Also, data collected in the spring are almost always used to initially plan for students' fall schedules.

**Q** **Holly Lu**

At which point in the tiered model for high school students do you believe eligibility determination for special education should begin?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Special education eligibility begins as soon as someone suspects a disability. That can happen at anytime in the process. LD diagnosis does not occur by suspecting a disability, then starting Tier 2, then starting Tier 3, etc. RTI should be up and running as the service model for students who struggle.

At any time in the process an eligibilty evaluation can occur, but may only consist of examining data within Tier 2 or Tier 3 and deciding that those data are enough to make or rule out a diagnosis. Schools cannot say that we cannot evaluate a kid for LD until a Tier 3 intervention happens etc., but they can look at the data and say that those data are sufficient to rule out a disability at this point.

**Q** **Sharen**

Do you have recommendations for using the RTI framework for specialized populations such as dually identified students (English Learners with Disabilities)?

**A** **Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.**

Yes! RTI should be an appropriate framework for all students. Students with IEPs in the area in which the model is running (e.g. an IEP in reading with an RTI model for reading) are likely pulled out of the RTI process because they get their service from special education. I think that should change too, but I'm willing to accept it for now. However, students whose disability is not reading (again for example), but who are ELL also participate in the RTI framework.

They receive which ever intervention the data suggest is most appropriate (e.g., decoding), but we always add a vocabulary component to it. Sharon Vaughn has a great book about how to do that, and she wrote the following article: [Response to Intervention in Reading for English Language Learners](#)

**Q** *Kathy Francoeur*  
How do you measure student engagement?

**A** *Rebecca Sarlo, Ph.D.*  
Excellent measures of behavioral engagement include school/class attendance, discipline data, and extra-curricular involvement. Academic engagement can be measured by looking at credits earned, GPA, homework completion and time on task.

Other important indicators to consider involve the amount of academic time available for students. So, variables like bell to bell instruction, time scheduled for specific courses, and effective use of transitions.

Psychological and social engagement indicators are best assessed through student survey and student focus groups. There is a brand new report which highlights various student engagement measurement tools called "Measuring student engagement in upper elementary through high school: a description of 21 instruments" put out by the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. It is an excellent resource and I encourage your team to review it.

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*  
IES published a guide with many ideas: [Measuring student engagement in upper elementary through high school: a description of 21 instruments](#)

**Q** *Kathy Francoeur*  
Can you suggest a good RtI implementation checklist. My school use many such checklist from the PBIS to help implement PBIS with fidelity and these intruments hae been critical to our success and help improve our system. What could be suggested for RtI?

**A** *Matthew K. Burns, Ph.D.*  
Yes, go to the [Minnesota Response to Intervention Center website](#). There are many very good checklists on that site. Also know that Florida has several that are used throughout the state.

That concludes our RTI Talk for today. Thanks to everyone for the thoughtful questions and thanks to our experts, Drs. Matthew Burns, Hollie Pettersson and Rebecca Sarlo, for their time today.

**Please also take a few moments at the completion of this event to give us your feedback by taking our [survey](#)!**

**Related Reading from RTINetwork.org: Response to Intervention in Secondary Schools:**

- [Is It on Your Radar Screen?](#) by Barbara J. Ehren, Ed.D.
- [Create Your Implementation Blueprint: Introduction](#), by Susan L. Hall, Ed.D.
- [Screening for Reading Problems in Grades 4 Through 12](#), by Evelyn S. Johnson, Ed.D., and Juli L. Pool, Ph.D.
- [Integrating Academic and Behavior Supports Within an Rtl Framework](#), by Hank Bohanon, Ph.D., Steve Goodman, Ph.D., and Kent McIntosh, Ph.D.

**Additional Resources:**

- [National Center on Response to Intervention](#)
- [National High School Center](#)