LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY BULLETIN

TITLE:	Multi-Tiered Framework for Instruction, Intervention, and Support
NUMBER:	BUL-4827.1
ISSUER:	Judy Elliott Chief Academic Officer
DATE:	September 1, 2009

POLICY:

The goal of LAUSD is that every student, pre-school through adult, will receive quality, standards-based instruction in all content areas to enable all students to graduate College Prepared and Career Ready. The purpose of this bulletin is to establish the District's Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²) framework for instruction as policy and to describe and provide clear direction, support, and guidance to teachers, site-administrators, Local District, and Central support staff to ensure that students receive the necessary supports to achieve proficiency in grade-level standards across content areas and graduate high school ready to lead successful and productive lives.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI^2) is a systemic multi-tiered framework that guides the development of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction (e.g. literacy, numeracy, language development, and positive behavior support across content areas), and intervention that is matched to student need and directed by student outcome data from multiple measures. RtI^2 embraces evidence-based instruction and the District's Discipline Foundation Policy. It provides the structure within which all efforts of LAUSD fit to ensure that instruction, academic, and behavioral/social emotional needs of all students are the highest priority, including English Learners (ELs), Standard English Learners (SELs), Students with Disabilities (SWDs), and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students.

The RtI^2 framework establishes a process for providing increasing levels of instructional time and intensity whereby the needs of all learners are identified, supported early, and effectively, and high performing students have access to acceleration in learning. The RtI^2 framework is based on the provision of good, quality, first instruction and the use of data to identify students for appropriate acceleration and interventions. RtI^2 implementation is everyone's responsibility and advances academic achievement through frequent progress monitoring, on-going data collection and analysis as well as the provision of immediate, evidence-based intervention for students who need it.

The RtI² model embraces the importance of involving families and the community in collaborative partnerships in culturally relevant ways. Effective partnerships include students, parents, families, community members and educators. A culturally relevant school environment fosters parent involvement, improves student outcomes, and is conducive to accelerated learning.

There are key elements that have proven successful in improving student outcomes (Torgesen & Crawford, 2007). These must be carefully considered and regularly revisited when implementing the RtI². These elements include:

- Strong leadership
- Positive belief in our students and ourselves
- Dedication and high expectations throughout the school community
- Data analysis and utilization
- Effective, flexible scheduling
- Targeted professional development
- Evidenced-based intervention programs
- Parent involvement

See "Related Resources" for the link to the full text.

MAJOR CHANGES: This policy serves as a framework under which all District practices relating to instruction and intervention are to be applied and implemented.

GUIDELINES: There are five essential components of RtI² that will be covered in this bulletin:
- Multi-tiered framework to instruction and intervention
- Problem-solving progress
- Data-based decision-making
- Academic engaged time
- Professional development

A. MULTI-TIERED FRAMEWORK TO INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION

In a multi-tiered approach to instruction and intervention, teachers provide instruction at each tier of service that is differentiated, culturally responsive, evidence-based and aligned to grade-level, content standards. All students should have universal access to this high-quality instruction. Universal access refers to the right of all students to have equal opportunity and access to high quality, grade-level instruction and behavioral support, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, background, or disabilities.
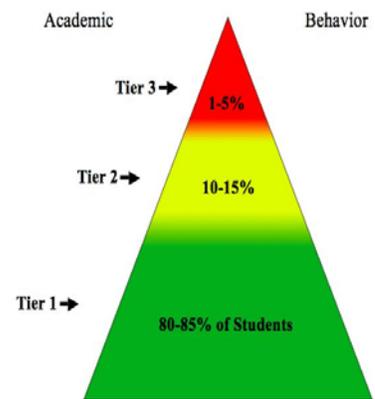
In the LAUSD, four instructional methodologies and strategies have been identified to scaffold culturally and linguistically diverse students' universal access to core instruction. The research affirms that all students, including ELs, SELs, SWDs, and GATE students benefit from the integration of key access methodologies such as cooperative and communal learning, instructional conversations, the use of advanced graphic organizers, and targeted academic language development (Attachment A). These methodologies are used across three tiers.

Tier 1 is known as "Core Instruction" to which all students must have universal access. All students receive high quality, evidence-based, core classroom curriculum and instruction. It is expected that of all of the students receiving core instruction, 80-85% of students will be proficient when good first instruction is delivered. To monitor and evaluate student progress, California Standards Tests (CST), CELDT, periodic assessments, curriculum-based measures, and behavior data (e.g. suspensions, office daily referrals) are used to guide and inform instruction/intervention.

Within Tier 1, identified students receive additional differentiated instruction and support to improve their academic performance and to prevent them from falling behind. All students are universally screened at the beginning of the school year in order to identify learners that need additional support or advanced learners that need acceleration or extended learning opportunities. Instruction is matched to student needs based on levels of performance and rates of student progress. Over time, quick curriculum-based assessments are used to measure growth, monitor progress and inform changes in instruction.

Differentiation of instruction begins in Tier I and continues across the tiers. It requires recognition of students' varying levels of readiness, interests, background knowledge, language, culture, and learning preferences. It is the ability to respond to and proactively plan for differing abilities in the same classroom. Differentiation can occur through modifications to the content (what is taught), process (how its taught), product (how learning is shown), and/or resources available in the classroom (core program or supplementary materials). In order to differentiate instruction to maximize student growth, teachers can add depth and complexity to the curriculum, scaffold lessons, pre-assess students to form flexible groupings, implement interest and/or learning centers, employ questioning strategies, allow for independent study, preview, review, reteach, and frontload. When assessment measures indicate that a student needs more instruction and intervention to access the core curriculum, then Tier 2 services are provided.

Tier 2, known as "Strategic or Supplemental Intervention," is provided in addition to Tier 1 core instruction. Strategic Intervention is for 10-15% of students that need additional time and type of instruction to learn successfully. Strategic interventions include more intensive (time and focus), immediate instruction aligned to students' instructional needs based on data from multiple measures including ongoing progress monitoring. Tier 2 serves the needs of students that are not making adequate progress given good, first instruction in Tier 1 and is for those in need of additional instruction to increase the impact of core instruction to achieve proficiency. Strategic interventions can give students more time to learn either by using an instructional strategy used in the core or a different instructional pedagogy - whichever benefits the student more.

Tier 3, known as "Intensive Intervention," is for an estimated 1-5% of students that need individualized and/or very small-group instruction that is highly focused, in addition to Tiers 1 and 2, and designed to accelerate student progress. Tier 3 typically includes use of curricula, pedagogy, or instruction that is different from Tier 1 and Tier 2 because data indicate that academic or behavioral progress is delayed despite well-implemented instruction/intervention. Progress monitoring at Tier 3 is more frequent. These assessments provide in-depth information about a student's instructional needs and are used to identify academic deficits. In addition, close monitoring allows for the adjustment of curricula and instruction/intervention.

Tier 3 services are **not** synonymous with special education services, but rather a critical step in providing intensive intervention so that students have an additional opportunity to succeed and learn. Within the District's tiered approach to instruction and intervention, the intensity, frequency, and duration of support increases and student-teacher ratio decreases as students move up the tiers. Instructional strategies and examples are provided in the following attachments and can be used as guidelines for planning the instructional day/class periods for each of the tiers.

Student performance is monitored closely to evaluate progress and the effectiveness of all instruction and intervention. Intensity, frequency, duration of support, and student-teacher ratio changes as the students move through the tiers, as does the frequency of progress monitoring. This multi-tiered framework is a continuum of instruction and intervention where an individual student may simultaneously receive differentiated instruction in varying intensity in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 in order to match learning supports to both academic and behavioral/social-emotional needs.

B. PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS

A second essential component of the multi-tiered framework to instruction and intervention is consistent, step-by-step problem-solving. The problem-solving approach helps to ensure that all factors (curriculum, pedagogy, school and classroom environment, expectations) have been thoroughly examined to inform modifications to instruction/

intervention. A student's failure to learn should not be automatically deemed the result of a learning disability. It is imperative to collect and analyze robust data on instruction, intervention, and supports to help determine why a student is not progressing at the same rate as peers. The problem-solving process utilizes four basic questions:
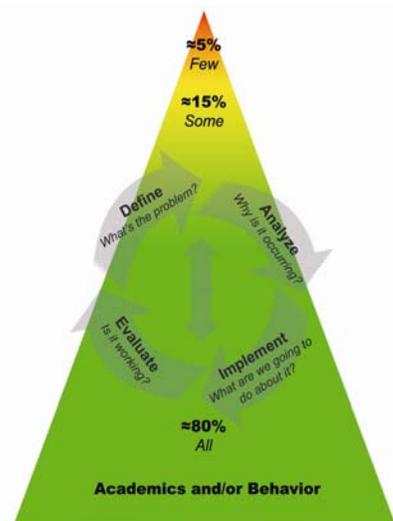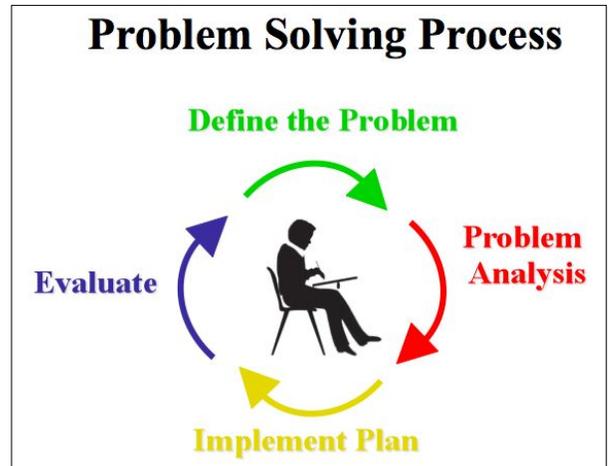
1. Define the problem:
   What is it we want student(s) to achieve?

2. Problem analysis:
   Why is the student(s) unable to achieve the academic and/or behavioral benchmark?

3. Implementation:
   What are we going to do about it?

4. Evaluation:
   Did our instruction/intervention work? What is the response to instruction and intervention?

The problem-solving process is used continually throughout the school year to determine the appropriate level of intensity and service necessary for individual students to be successful.

C. DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING

Another essential component of the multi-tiered framework to instruction and intervention is that instruction and/or behavior decisions for instruction and interventions are based on multiple assessment measures. Early identification of student needs can prevent learning gaps, provide additional time for instruction/intervention, and promote student potential. Data are first collected early in the year and utilized to inform teacher and support staff decisions at each tier of the pyramid. Fluent and ongoing use of data allows the teacher and support staff to determine if the student should remain with current program supports, modify current supports within a tier, lessen supports by moving to a lower tier or intensify supports by moving up a tier.

The effective use of formative assessments is crucial to help educators determine the appropriate intervention for students. Progress monitoring assessments can be administered frequently and are sensitive to small increments of growth over time. These assessment results provide guidance in making decisions that promote student achievement. Further guidance on types of assessments, cut scores for identifying student needs in order to align instruction, and suggested resources will be forthcoming in a reference guide.

D. ACADEMIC ENGAGED TIME

Academic Engaged Time (AET) is the number of minutes each day/week which students receive quality academic instruction and demonstrate behaviors that reflect student engagement in that instruction. Effective use of instructional time, specifically, academic engaged time, is a strong predictor of student achievement at all levels. Instructional leadership and guidance can help ensure that teachers have time to collaboratively plan how to spend instructional time, minimize transition time, and maximize student engagement. Effective pedagogy and high-quality teacher-student interaction are key elements in this work; the effective use of access methodologies guide teaching and promote learning for all students. Academic engagement is supported by clearly defining behavioral expectations, teaching and reinforcing appropriate student behavior, using effective classroom management skills, and correcting students calmly and efficiently.

Scheduling is one of the most critical aspects of providing effective intervention. Specific time for intervention must be built into the daily and master schedule in order to ensure that *time* is available to provide students with appropriately differentiated instruction and services. Effective scheduling reflects consistent increased time and intensity of instruction for Tier 2 and 3 services for students. For elementary students, a recommended option is to set aside an additional 30-45 minutes each day for Tier 2 and more for Tier 3 services. For secondary, a second block of instruction should be scheduled to allow for Tier 2 and 3 services to take place.

E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The fundamental purpose of RtI² is to improve the educational outcomes for each student in all content areas, PreK-12. Students require and should have equal access to the highest level of instructional expertise and pedagogy in all tiers.

For this to occur, ongoing professional development is essential to ensure that teachers are prepared and supported to meet the needs of all students, through assessment, instruction, and intervention within the RtI² framework. Teachers are encouraged to take on leadership roles and professional development for teachers and staff should be appropriately differentiated in order to access the talents and strengths found within the professional learning community. It is imperative that professional development, support, and resources are available to every level of the organization, Central, Local District, and School-Based personnel.

More information on professional development opportunities will be forthcoming.

RtI² is a student-centered, multi-tiered framework that maintains a marked focus on the needs of all learners, especially those populations of students who have traditionally been underserved, and thereby unsuccessful, in our educational system. This evidence-based, multi-tiered framework ensures consistent and systemic articulation of student needs and strengths, the alignment of instruction and resources, and improved academic and behavioral outcomes for all students.

AUTHORITY: This is the policy of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

RELATED RESOURCES: November 14, 2008, RtI² Correspondence/Attachment - Jack O'Connell
http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr08ltr1114.asp
http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr08ltr1114att.asp

BUL-4633.0 *Program Improvement Local Education Agency Plan Year 3 – Corrective Action Implementation*, dated February 18, 2009, issued by Federal and State Education Programs

REF-2025.2 *Development and Implementation of a Learning Center at Secondary Schools,* dated October 23, 2007, issued by Special Education

Content Area Frameworks for California Public Schools: Reading/Language Arts (2007); Mathematics (2006); English/Language Development (2007).

Crawford, E. and Torgesen, (2007). J. Florida Center for Reading Research publication: *Teaching All Students to Read: Practices from Reading First Schools with Strong Intervention Outcomes* at:
http://www.eric.ed.gov:80/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/34/ea/44.pdf

LAUSD GATE website: http://sfpc.lausd.k12.ca.us/GATE/index.html

Differentiation Central (Carol Tomlinson and related publications):
www.differentiationcentral.com

LAUSD Discipline Policy website: http://disciplinepolicy.lausd.net

National Resources to Support District and School Implementation of RtI
www.rtinetwork.org
- Monthly RtI Talks
- Virtual Visits to Schools Implementing RtI/Webinars/Blogs
- Progress Monitoring Tools to Assess Level of Implementation

www.nasdse.org
- Building and District Implementation Blueprints
- Current Research (evidence-based practices) that Supports Use of RtI

www.floridarti.usf.edu
- Introductory Course (Web-Based/Competency Driven)

ASSISTANCE: For further assistance or information, please contact your Local District RtI[2] Coordinator.

Local District 1: Terrance Jakubowski at (818) 654-3634

Local District 2: Kenneth Barker at (818) 755-5435

Local District 3: Zepure Kivork at (310) 253-7149

Local District 4: Sandra Miller at (323) 932-2280

Local District 5: Jonathan Sison at (323) 232-2261

Local District 6: Michael Blount at (323) 278-3947

Local District 7: Grace Bishop at (323) 242-1362

Local District 8: Ron Tanimura at (310) 354-3481

At the central office, you may contact Alison Yoshimoto-Towery in the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and School Support at (213) 241-5333 or alison.towery@lausd.net.

KEY ACCESS METHODOLOGIES

Attachment A

Cooperative and Communal Learning Environments:
supportive learning environments that motivate students to engage more with learning and that promote language acquisition through meaningful interactions and positive learning experiences to achieve an instructional goal. Working collaboratively in small groups, students learn faster and more efficiently, have greater retention of concepts, and feel positive about their learning.

Instructional Conversations:
discussion-based lessons carried out with the assistance of more competent others who help students arrive at a deeper understanding of academic content. ICs provide opportunities for students to use language in interactions that promote analysis, reflection, and critical thinking. These classroom interactions create opportunities for students' conceptual and linguistic development by making connections between academic content, students' prior knowledge, and cultural experiences

Academic Language Development (ALD):
the teaching of specialized language, vocabulary, grammar, structures, patterns, and features that occur with high frequency in academic texts and discourse. ALD builds on the conceptual knowledge and vocabulary students bring from their home and community environments. Academic language proficiency is a prerequisite skill that aids comprehension and prepares students to effectively communicate in different academic areas.

Advanced Graphic Organizers:
visual tools and representations of information that show the structure of concepts and the relationships between ideas to support critical thinking processes. Their effective use promotes active learning that helps students construct knowledge, organize thinking, visualize abstract concepts, and gain a clearer understanding of instructional material.