IDENTIFYING KEY FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING AND SUSTAINING RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: A STUDY OF TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

BRENTEN D. BYRD

2015

The undersigned, approved by the Department Chair of Graduate Studies in Education, have examined a dissertation entitled:

IDENTIFYING KEY FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING AND SUSTAINING RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: A STUDY OF TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Presented by Brenten D. Byrd a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education and herby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

_____
Dr. Mick Arnold, Advisor/Chair
Graduate Education, Southwest Baptist University

_____
Dr. Robert Perry, Committee Member
Graduate Education, Southwest Baptist University

_____
Dr. Kevin Cooper, Committee Member
Assistant Superintendent Webb City School District

IDENTIFYING KEY FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING AND SUSTAINING RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: A STUDY OF TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Graduate Education Department
Southwest Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Brenten D. Byrd, B.S., M.S., Ed.S.

Dr. Mick Arnold, Dissertation Advisor

March 2015

Acknowledgements

My journey through the doctoral program at Southwest Baptist University has been a difficult yet rewarding experience. For me the pursuit of a doctoral degree was more of a personal journey to prove to myself, my mom and dad, and my wife and kids that if you work hard in life you can accomplish your goals. The doors that a doctoral degree opens up are endless and the future, whatever it may be, is filled with many opportunities.

First and foremost I would like to thank my wife, Heather and my two boys Dylan and Hudson for their support and patience while I took time away from my family to complete this journey. I know there were many weekends, early mornings, and sporting events where my wife Heather was completely alone with the kids trying to figure out how to get two boys to two different sporting events, getting them up and ready for school, and entertaining them while I was away working on my degree. I am thankful that I have a loving, patient, committed wife who was willing to sacrifice her wants and needs for me to complete my goal. I also want to thank Dylan and Hudson for their patience when dad was gone or tired from working on my schoolwork. My hope is that I have set a good example for both of you that hard work and a little sacrifice may be necessary to reach your goals in life. I love all of you very much and appreciate all of your support throughout this journey!

I would also like to thank my mom and dad for the love, support, and motivation throughout my doctoral quest. You have supported me throughout my life, pushing me when I need pushed and comforting me when I have struggles. You were our family

support when we couldn't get two boys to two different places. One of my many goals in life is to make you proud, and while I do not think you need the degree to make you proud I hope that the hard work shows you that you have done an amazing job at raising your kids.

Lastly, I would like to thank my committee members and the staff at Harry S Truman. My committee members Dr. Mick Arnold, Dr. Robert Perry, and Dr. Kevin Cooper have been amazing to work with. I appreciate all of the time and effort you put in to make sure that I stayed on track and completed my dissertation. Thank you for your words of encouragement and correction, which where exactly what I needed to keep me from procrastinating the completion of this journey. I appreciate your professionalism throughout this process. Finally, I would like to thank the staff at Harry S Truman for their encouraging words and support throughout the doctoral program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

Abstract

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a model used to help students who are at-risk of not making the progress necessary to understand and keep up with their grade level work. The RtI model focuses on finding high quality research based curriculum and pairing it with classroom instruction provided by a highly qualified teacher. RtI is designed with a tiered model of intervention with the first tier being the high quality instruction that every student receives in the classroom, then the second tier which can be done by the teacher or an interventionist is a more focused instruction based on the needs of the students, the third tier is a more intense instruction based on student data. The purpose of this study is to determine teacher perception of RtI, professional development for RtI, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

The sample population consisted of teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference in southwestern Missouri. Teachers were in agreement with the success of RtI in meeting students' academic needs. They were also in agreement the professional development provided was effective, the resources they needed were available, and RtI was implemented with fidelity. However, there were some statistically significant differences between the various demographic categories.

Future study is recommended for Response to Intervention in the middle school. Researching the lack of time available for new models or programs would also be a valuable study for schools. While this study focused on teacher perceptions, it would also be beneficial to study student-learning outcomes within RtI

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As long as children have gone to school there have been students who excel in school and students who struggle in school, and all the while there have been educators who have tried to find ways to help those students. One of the recent models schools have turned to is Response to Intervention, which is a direct result of No Child Left Behind (2000) and IDEIA (2004), and has impacted how schools determine if a student has a learning disability (Howard & Hoyt, 2009). The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (2007) stated that RtI was designed to make sure that a lack of high quality instruction in reading and math was not the reason children were underachieving and suspected of having a learning disability. While RtI is not the sole reason for determining whether or not a student had a learning disability it is one of the steps in the documentation process of special education. Response to Intervention has been implemented not to identify students with a learning disability, but instead to provide early interventions and high-quality instruction to all students (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012). One of the key concepts of the RtI framework is that educators use evidence-based instructional practices to help at-risk learners (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012; Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009; Howard, 2009). Not only does a child have to receive evidence-based instruction, but there must also be documentation on how that evidence-based instruction impacted the student learning. Data collected from RtI is one of a variety of data pieces collected for a comprehensive evaluation of a student to determine eligibility for special education (U.S. Department of Education Office of

Special Education Programs, 2007). The focus on RtI should be that all students have multiple opportunities to learn through early-targeted interventions to remediate difficulties, and prevent future academic difficulties (Sullivan & Long, 2010).

The RtI Action Network (2008) describes RtI as a way to help struggling learners through a multi-tier approach. Students are closely monitored to determine their progress at each stage of intervention. Teachers will use data to from student monitoring to further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both. Beecher describes Response to Intervention as an alternative approach to sitting and waiting for a child to fall far enough behind to receive some sort of specialized service. The basis of RtI is to provide timely instruction to students and provide proactive monitoring of students who are not making progress. Response to Intervention models are similar in that they use scientifically based resources, progress monitor, give student time to improve, and monitor fidelity of implementation. According to Mellard, McKnight, and Jordan (2010), another similarity among RtI models is the intensity of instruction increase with each tier, and this includes minutes of instruction, frequency, and duration. The varying models differ in the number of levels or tiers, who is responsible for instruction, and the role it plays in determining special education eligibility (Berkley, Bender, Peaster, Saunders 2009). Barnes and Harlacher (2008), fear that even though RtI meets the "research to practice" needs it is being looked at as a restrictive model rather than the flexible model that it should be in schools. Key elements to successfully implementing RtI are multitiered or layered instruction, using data driven decision-making, and evidence research-based practices (Hoover & Love, 2011).

Data driven decision-making is a key element of the RtI framework, and gives a purpose of assessments, which should be to help guide the instruction of the teacher to help improve student achievement. Formative assessments are more frequent smaller assessments that give the teacher immediate information about what the student can do and what the student may need more instruction on. People often look at assessment as something that is separate from instruction and actually takes time away from instruction. Quality formative assessments are integrated into the everyday instruction and can come in a variety of ways, such as observation, questions, student interest inventories, verbal questioning, quizzes, etc (Mellard, 2012).

The use of assessments and observation within the RtI framework may help ensure resources and teaching are being implemented with fidelity. When implementing any curriculum, program, or framework it is important to implement with fidelity. Implementation with fidelity is using your resources and instructional practices in a way that is consistent and accurate with the way it was intended. The reason that fidelity is important is because it will help educators understand why students are successful or not. If a teacher is not implementing with fidelity, student failure could be due to poor or inconsistent instruction instead of the students' poor response to the instruction. Many jobs have a checklist of things that need to be done or a job description, which is like a checklist of duties that need to be performed. Education is no different and the education of students should not be different. Teachers need to have checklist of items that they make sure that they are meeting with each student to ensure that they are teaching with fidelity (Mellard, 2010).

To help ensure implementation with fidelity school must provide appropriate and timely professional development. The Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 required Missouri public schools to allocate one percent of revenue from the foundation formula towards professional development for their educators. Of the monies allocated, 75 percent had to be spent in the same fiscal year to meet the objectives in the each school's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. The objective of the professional development had to be tied directly to student and educator learning goals (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2013). Missouri Schools have adopted the goal of becoming one of the top ten schools by 2020. One of the objectives to obtain the goal of Top 10 By 20 states "Missouri will prepare, develop and support effective educators" (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012, para. 3). According to Dufour, five components of effective professional development should include: (1)Driven by student achievement data, (2) Ensure adequate resources for implementation (3) Must be effectively led (4) Should energize teachers and (5) Linked to the evaluation system in schools (Dufour, 2004).

This study focused on the factors of implementation along with the perceptions of teachers within the RtI model. If a program does not have buy-in from the people who are in charge of implementing it, then the program will not have the successful outcomes that are intended. Therefore, teacher perception could greatly impact the fidelity of implementation of the RtI model, which would reduce the successful implementation of the model.

Problem Statement

School districts and sometimes-individual schools within a district are mandated to implement a program or change a program without receiving adequate funding to achieve the task. Often times these mandated programs fail due to many different factors including lack of funding, poor professional development or professional learning, lack of time for implementation, low teacher buy-in, and no oversight of implementation. Teachers continue to have new programs and responsibilities added to their plate and rarely get anything taken off of their plate, and this can lead to teacher apathy about programs that may be impactful to student learning. Response to Intervention is a model that has been added to the teachers' workload and responsibilities by administrators, with the expectation of making it work. Teacher perception may directly impact the fidelity and implementation of the Response to Intervention model in schools. Therefore, perception must be addressed for fidelity and implementation of Response to Intervention to occur. While there have been studies done on teacher and administrator perception it is important to continue the research in the hopes of finding a way to impact perceptions to improve the education of our students and increase student learning outcomes. According to Mellard (2010) fidelity of implementation has to be monitored if a program such as RtI is going to be successful. Teacher perception of Response to Intervention may impede successful implementation of the framework; therefore it is important to understand the teacher perceptions of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

Rationale/Purpose of Study

Experienced educators find it frustrating to observe students struggling to achieve academically and yet not qualifying for existing programs. The question then falls back to school leaders as to why improvements are not seen; is it a lack of training, a lack of resources, poor support, poor curriculum, or a lack of follow up? Educators want the best for their students, but often resist change because the scope of education is always changing and teachers get frustrated with it. Every person in the organization has their own frame from which they view the organization, but it is important to be able to see the organization from other frames if change is going to be successful and sustainable throughout the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Response to Intervention offers a possibility of improved student achievement, but is met with resistance from teachers. As an educator the researcher wants to study the field of research available on RtI and provide recommendations for schools and school districts that are interested in implementing RtI in their schools, while trying to avoid the hurdles that may stand in the way.

With the continuous increase in school accountability on student achievement, it is vital for schools to find ways to meet the needs of students. However, just implementing a new program for students and teachers may not improve student learning. Response to Intervention is a model that provides teachers with the steps on how to increase student learning through a process that fully involves all staff members and students in the learning process. This model is not a quick fix nor is it a one size fits all type of model. Key elements to successfully implementing RtI are multitiered or layered instruction, using data driven decision-making, and evidence research-based practices

(Hoover & Love, 2011). In RtI, teachers are using data based decision-making to come up with a plan to help each individual student with the skills that they are struggling. It is no longer acceptable for teachers to say they have tried everything and the child is not responding, so they must be a special education student. Teachers will bring students to the special education team without the data to show what they have tried and how the student has responded. Howard (2009) believes that special education and RtI are two separate entities, and while RtI could lead to a special education referral it is not the primary purpose. The purpose of RtI is to provide students with a safety net to catch at-risk students and improve their skill set before they are referred for special education. If a school has done their due diligence in collecting the data and providing the appropriate instructional interventions, and the student is still unable to make the appropriate gains, then the school will have the documentation needed for a special education referral in the end when everything else has failed.

The purpose of this study is to look at teacher perceptions of professional development, available resource, and fidelity of implementation of RtI, and the impact they have on teachers' perceptions of whether or not they have a successful RtI program. The information will be helpful for Elementary teachers and administrators whose schools are implementing the RtI model or other similar models. By finding teacher perspectives of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation other schools can avoid the possible hurdles that can impede the success of RtI. Addressing perception issues upfront will also increase teacher buy-in, while decreasing time spent for proper implementation.

Independent Variable

The independent variable is the teacher perception of the success or non-success of implementation of RtI in a school building.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variables are the teacher perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

Statement of Null Hypotheses

Null-Hypotheses:

1. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the professional development provided.
2. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the available resources provided.
3. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of fidelity of implementation.

Limitations/Delimitations

Limitations: The limitations in this study include truthfulness of responses, number of people who respond.

Delimitations: The author is delimiting this study to Missouri Elementary teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference, those schools that are implementing Response to Intervention (RtI) model.

Design Controls

The researcher added reverse questions to the survey. The purpose of the reverse questions was to ensure that the respondents were reading the questions and did not just go through the survey responding the same to all questions. The reverse questions also help improve the reliability of the information received, because the respondents should answer the reverse questions opposite of the other questions. If respondents did not answer the reverse questions opposite of the other questions then the researcher would disregard those surveys, thus improving the reliability of the information.

Summary

Response to Intervention (RtI) has become a popular model to help schools meet the rigorous accountability goals set forth by the state and federal government, and while the state is concerned with the outcomes there is little focus on the fidelity of implementation of the RtI model. Through the research it will be important to figure out teacher perceptions of RtI along with the possible obstacles that will need to be overcome for successful implementation of RtI with fidelity. Educators are constantly looking for ways to help their students and they struggle with those students who never seem to make the gains needed to catch up with their peers, and there is research available that shows that RtI can have a positive impact on student achievement if it is implemented with fidelity. Through a survey of certified teachers the researcher hopes to add to knowledge base of information available to help schools find a way to reach students who are at-risk by overcoming the obstacles and perceptions that may impede successful implementation of RtI, and might also provide information that could be useful in the implementation of other programs or models.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Richard Allington has received credit for laying the groundwork for the RtI model. Allington believes that RtI is our best hope for reaching full literacy, however, the way in which RtI is implemented will help determine the results that schools see in the end. According to Allington in an interview with Rebora (2010) schools do not need to use a scripted program that promises reading improvements, but instead need to use professional development for teachers so that they know how to teach reading correctly. Schools should not be using paraprofessionals to teach struggling learners, but rather train professional educators to provide high quality reading interventions (Robora, 2010). According to Robora's (2010) interview with Allington he gave credit to the federal government for writing a law that was not very prescriptive, which gave schools the freedom to try interventions designed to improve reading before students are tested for special education. Allington was not the only key person in the development of the RtI model. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs also played a large role in the development and implementation of RtI.

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (2007) believes RtI was designed to ensure the lack of high quality instruction in reading and math was not the reason children were underachieving and suspected of having a learning disability. While schools were not allowed to use RtI as the sole reason for determining whether or not a student had a learning disability it was one of the steps in the documentation process of special education. Response to Intervention has been

implemented not to identify students with a learning disability, but instead to provide early interventions and high-quality instruction to all students (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012). One of the key concepts of the RtI framework is that educators use evidence-based instructional practices to help at-risk learners (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012; Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009; Howard, 2009).

History of Special Education

The history of special education has gone through cycles depending on the era and the change in politics and paradigm shifts. Change in specials education can come from inside the profession of education or outside the profession and depends on the social perceptions at the time. Since there is little research on the history of special education except for specific areas of special education such as deaf education the researcher will look at worldview of special education reform and how it impacted special education in the United States. Then the focus will shift to reform and legislation, which lead to our current special education practices and the increased involvement of Response to Intervention.

Before the mid-eighteenth century people who did not fit in to the norms of society were put into one categorized as idiot and were given few if any rights. Later in the eighteenth century movements were focused on the improved treatment of people who were poor, a slaves, and the disabled (Battaglino, 2007). While the European Enlightenment improved the treatment of all people in France there was specific focus on improvement of language development for people with hearing and sight disabilities, which spread to the United States and Canada. Many of the improvements to the

treatment of individuals with disabilities was based on philosophical movements and evangelical dedication (Battaglino, 2007; Winzer, 2006).

In the early 1800's institutions were created through the church to provide a place for vulnerable children along with the disabled. At this time the church felt it was their duty to form the character of the disabled and prove that all people were capable of being saved. However, putting disabled children in an institution to be watched and taken care of was also a form of social control teaching these children to be a producer for society rather then just a consumer or receiver of charity. Many of these institutions soon became overcrowded and had many flaws (Battaglino, 2007). These institutions soon became farm labor where students would perform jobs on a farm; work with heavy machinery, or completed jobs like sewing or laundry. At the time many of the disabled were considered incurable, which meant they would never be released from whichever institution they were sent (Winzer, 2006)

By the middle to late eighteen hundreds schools began to accept the need to educate all students, even deviant students. However, the school system struggled when it came to dealing with students who were disobedient or did not conform and were considered a threat to the general classroom. Educators soon came up with a segregated class that was ungraded for the students who could not conform or were considered troublemakers. The special classes failed due to a lack of trained personnel, funding, and resources. While education was meant for all students there was little done when poor farming families or families with disabled children did not send their students to school. When compulsory attendance laws, first passed in 1852 in Massachusetts, special education classes became a permanent part of public schools, and schools began to offer

specialized training for their teachers (Pulliam and Van Patten, 2007). Even though special education classrooms were still segregated from the regular education classrooms there was improved instruction in those classrooms. Schools then faced a new issue of the number of special education students increasing due to improved health care and the reduction of child labor. To address these issues there were 175 college institutions offering a special education preparation program (Battaglino, 2007; Winzer, 2006).

Prior to the 1950s children with disabilities were often sent to state institutions to live their life with little to no education being provided. However, in the late 1950s federal legislation began to change that with the passing of several key laws. The Training of Professional Personnel Act of 1959 (PL 86-158), which trained leaders to educate children with mental retardation. In 1961 the Teachers of the Deaf Act (PL 87-276), trained personnel to work with deaf or hard of hearing children, and PL 88-164 expanded training for all disability areas. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (PL 89-10) and State Schools Act (PL 89-313) gave grants to educate children with disabilities. In 1972 the Handicapped Children's Early Education Assistance Act of 1968 (PL90-538) and Economic Opportunities Amendments (PL 92-424) gave support for exemplary early childhood programs and increased enrollment in Head Start for children with disabilities (Office of Special Education Programs, 2007). In 1975 Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), to help states meet the individual needs of children with disabilities and their families and protect their rights. Since the passing of Public Law 94-142 the number of students indentified as learning disabled has increased by more than 200 percent (Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2005). The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004, allowed schools to use Response to Intervention (RtI) as an alternative way of identifying students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities describes specific learning disability (SLD) as individuals with severe underachievement in academic areas due to a neurological delay or dysfunction. Important features of SLD include low achievement in relation to aptitude, deficits in perceptual or cognitive processes, evidence presumably neurological conditions. According to Congress in (IDEIA, 2004), the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 ensured that children received a free appropriate education, however there was a lack of focus on research based teaching strategies for children with disabilities. Congress continued on to list multiple ways of improving educational experience for children with disabilities by: having high expectations, putting disabled children in the least restrictive environment, strengthening the role of parents in the education of their children, coordinating with outside resources to meet the needs of disabled children, and supporting high quality pre-service preparation and professional development for teachers. IDEIA 2004 is different from IDEA 1990 because for the first time educators could use RtI as a means of identifying student with a learning disability (LD), and they did not have to solely rely on the IQ-achievement discrepancy to identify students (Fuchs & Fuchs 2006, Zirkel, 2012). IQ-achievement discrepancy is the standard IQ score minus the standard achievement score; however, the discrepancy varies nationally in the way it is calculated and the IQ and achievement tests that are used (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). While states are not mandated to implement RtI, they are now able to decide if there is a better way to identify SLD (Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2005). If RtI is going to be a usable method for determining SLD then it must be in place

throughout the school. Response to Intervention is based on the premise that a research-based curriculum is in place and high quality instruction is taking place before intervening with students. Response to Intervention could impact schools by not only being able to determine SLD, but once the model is in place it could help predict at-risk students and provide opportunities to intervene with students who have academic or behavioral concerns (National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, 2007). There is a vast amount of research regarding RtI, however, schools today still struggle with the implementation of RtI and therefore, are not seeing the results teachers and administrators had hoped. Before questions can be answered educators must understand RtI is not a program that teachers can throw at an at-risk student to fix whatever problem may be occurring. Response to Intervention looks different in every school, and it is being implemented at varying levels at every school. Response to Intervention is a framework or a roadmap to help schools meet the needs of struggling learners before they have to be tested for special education (Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw, 2009).

Response to Intervention is a direct result of No Child Left Behind (2000) and IDEIA (2004), which has impacted how schools determine if a student has a learning disability. NCLB provided additional accountability to schools and added technology assistance and loan programs to help schools acquire needed special education resources (Howard, 2009). According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (2007), RtI was designed to make sure that a lack of high quality instruction in reading and math was not the reason children were underachieving and suspected of having a learning disability. While schools were not allowed to use RtI as the sole reason for determining whether or not a student had a learning disability it was

one of the steps in the documentation process of special education. Response to Intervention has been implemented not to identify students with a learning disability, but instead to provide early interventions and high-quality instruction to all students (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012). One of the key concepts of the RtI framework is that educators use evidence-based instructional practices to help at-risk learners (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, McKenna, 2012; Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2012; Howard, 2009). Not only does a child have to receive evidence-based instruction, but there must also be documentation on how that evidence-based instruction impacted the student learning. Data collected from RtI is one of a variety of data pieces collected for a comprehensive evaluation of a student to determine eligibility for special education (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs, 2007). The focus on RtI should be that all students have plenty of opportunity to learn through early-targeted interventions to remediate difficulties, and prevent future academic difficulties (Sullivan & Long, 2010).

Components of Response to Intervention

The RTI Action Network describes RtI as a way to help struggling learners through a multi-tier approach. Students are closely monitored to determine their progress at each stage of intervention. Teachers use data from student monitoring to further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both. Beecher (2010) describes RtI as an alternative approach to sitting and waiting for a child to fall far enough behind to receive some sort of specialized service. It is a proactive monitoring of students and providing timely instruction to students who are not making progress. RtI models are similar in that they use scientifically based resources, progress monitor, give student time to improve, and monitor fidelity of implementation

(Bean & Lillenstein, 2012). According to Mellard, McKnight, and Jordan (2010), another similarity among RtI models is the intensity of instruction increase with each tier, and this includes minutes of instruction, frequency, and duration. The varying models differ in the number of levels or tiers, who is responsible for instruction, and the role it plays in determining special education eligibility (Berkley, Bender, Peaster, Saunders 2009). Barnes and Harlacher (2008), fear that even though RtI meets the research to practice needs it is being looked at as a restrictive model rather than the flexible model that it should be in schools. Key elements to successfully implementing RtI are multitiered or layered instruction, using data driven decision-making, and evidence (research) based practices (Hoover & Love, 2011).

There are two broad approaches to RtI, problem-solving model and the standard protocol model (Berkley, Bender, Peaster, Saunders 2009). The problem-solving approach is specific to one student. The approach uses a team of people including teachers, administrator, counselor, and parent who meet and follow a process of four steps to help the student. In the four-step process they discuss the problem, pick an intervention, implement the intervention, and monitor the student's progress (Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs, McKnight, 2006). While the standard protocol model involves several students who are struggling with a similar concept. In this model the students are given standardized intervention that are research based (Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs, McKnight, 2006). According to Berkley, Bender, Peaster, and Saunders (2009), many states differ in the model that they choose to implement, and some states including Ohio, Florida, and Georgia use both the problem-solving and standard protocol models. However, even within the standard protocol model there are a variety of approaches depending on the

author you read, including two tiers, three tiers, or even four tiers, but the most common approach is the three-tiered model (Barnes & Harlacher, 2008).

The second approach referred to as the three-tiered model of RtI is the most common design used across the United States (Marinak & Mazzoni, 2012; Dunn, Cole Estrada, 2009). According to Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) interventions are more intense, groupings get smaller, and the time spent on interventions increases as students move across the teirs. Mellard, McKnight, and Jordan (2010) describe Tier I as providing access to quality instruction and teaching strategies; it is the level of primary prevention. While Tier II is more of a targeted approach designed to support the everyday classroom instruction for those students who continue to struggle despite receiving high quality, researched based instruction. Tier III is intense instruction for those few students who continue to struggle despite Tier 1 and Tier 2 efforts.

Tier 1 is the core curriculum that every student receives. It is high-quality curriculum that is research-based and teachers practice differentiated instruction (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009; Howard, 2009; Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw, 2009). According to Barbara Marinak and Susan Mazzaoni (2012), Tier 1 can be improved without tears, through intensive coaching and professional development. Researchers vary slightly on what success of Tier 1 looks like. Howard (2009) along with Greenwood and Kim (2012) believes that 80 percent of the students will be successful with quality Tier 1 instruction, while Buffum, Mattos, and Weber (2009) believe that 75 percent of the students will be at or above grade-level if the core curriculum is meeting the educational needs of students.

As stated earlier for Tier 1 to be successful there must be high quality curriculum and instruction. While there are arguments both ways about published programs, Howard (2009), Buffum, Mattos, and Weber (2012) agrees that teacher expertise is the difference in the quality of the program. Teachers have to be prepared when teaching a lesson. Published programs are only as good as the effort that teachers put in prior to teaching a lesson. Teachers need to break down the lesson by first looking at the student text and asking their own questions on a pad of sticky notes, so that they can transfer those questions to the teachers' manual and design their instruction based on the sticky not questions. Teachers can also find times in the text where students can stop and work with a partner or share their thoughts and feelings about the text. (Howard 2009). Schools should focus on setting high expectations of the students and staff, focus their resources and curriculum, and ensure all students learn by progress monitoring and providing appropriate interventions. Teachers should set high expectations and help students become engaged in the learning to maximize instruction time. Reading, writing and math should be the curriculum focus and upgrading students skills in these subjects will have an impact on all other subjects. Teachers should deliver high quality appropriate instruction and interventions that promotes students taking over control of their own learning with the teacher progress monitoring to provide extra support where needed (Buffum, Mattos, and Weber, 2009; Spear-Swerling & Cheesman, 2011).

High quality core curriculum and instruction is key to a quality Tier 1, but just as important is the teachers' ability to teach students at a level that they can understand it. If a school is looking to improve the core curriculum the most important step they can take is towards a differentiated classroom. There is not a curriculum or program out there that

is meant to fit all students. Students' abilities and learning are vastly different; therefore, the instruction that they receive must be different. Before a school can decide to provide Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions to a student who is struggle the classroom teacher must differentiate instruction for that student in the core curriculum through small group instruction with ability level text (Buffum, Mattos, and Weber, 2009). According to Tomlinson, Brimijoin, Narvaez (2008), there are several competencies that teachers must possess and receive professional development on before true differentiation can occur, and they include curriculum, instruction, and management. The curriculum needs to address state standards, but not be limited to them, and students need to be able to apply what they have learned. All students should be working at their levels to receive the same essential understanding with high levels of thought. The instruction should be flexible with time, space, and student groupings, with a variety of ways to access the essential content. The teacher should bring in outside resources, and allow a variety of ways for student to show their understanding of the content. Classroom philosophy and practice is valued, and the teacher is comfortable emphasizing student growth through effectively providing multiple sets of tasks to reach a similar objective (Tomlinson, Brimijoin, Narvaez, 2008). Differentiated instruction requires the teacher to understand the background of their students and know how those students learn best. Classroom teachers need to complete both formal assessments (DIBELS, AIMSweb), along with informal assessments (observations, exit slips) if they want to provide appropriate instructional activities for all of their students. While whole group instruction is important the most valued time of instruction is the small group instruction that allows the teacher to provide specific skills that the student needs (Howard, 2009). If a student continues to struggle

after core differentiated instruction and the data shows little to no growth then the student could be considered for Tier 2 intervention, which is a more individualized instruction focused on the students weakness in a certain area (Lenski, 2012).

Tier 2 interventions focus on what the students needs are and how the school will meet those needs. Not all students struggle in the core classroom instruction because they lack understanding of the material, some struggle because they do not want to be at school or they have other major events happening in their lives that distract them from learning (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009). According to Buffum, Mattos, and Weber (2009) 15 percent of students will have their needs met through Tier 2 instruction, while Howard (2009) says that 10-15 percent will have their needs met. Tier 2 instruction is usually in a small group setting and can be academic or behavioral depending on the needs of the student or group of students (Mellard, McKnight, Jordan, 2010). Students in Tier 2 receive an additional 30 minutes of instruction 2-3 times per week on a specific skill that is matched to the students specific needs (Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw, 2009). When looking at students who have failed to learn, educators must try to understand why the student did not learn. Some students struggle to learn because of the way the information is presented, which is why RtI focuses on Differentiated Instruction. Classroom teachers have to be aware of their instruction and whether or not they are reaching their students with the way they are presenting the information (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009; Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw 2009). Perhaps the student understood the initial instruction that was given, but need additional time to practice the skill that was taught. Sometimes students just need the information presented to them prior to the actual lesson. Giving students this prerequisite or background information

prior to the lesson will help them understand the lesson, which will allow them to be successful with the core instruction in the classroom (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009). Howard (2009) believes that there are four essential elements of Tier 2 instruction, supplementary resources that support high-quality instruction, more intensive targeted instruction, ongoing assessments, and team collaboration. The key to successful Tier 2 instruction is targeted interventions, which should be determined by a team of educators and not an individual teacher. This team would consist of the regular classroom teacher, grade level team members, reading specialist, perhaps another specialist depending on the need of the child, and an administrator. The team should look at all of the data that is available for that child along with listening to the in-depth insight that the classroom teacher has to offer (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009; Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw, 2009; Howard 2009). Since not all students struggle because of lack of understanding, rather because of a lack of effort the team may determine an intervention that is not necessarily academic. Intentional non-learners may have an intervention that includes mandatory study hall, homework help, frequent progress reports, study-skills class, goal setting, and targeted rewards (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009). Tier 2 instruction is not designed to be a long-term situation where a student stays in Tier 2 for the rest of their school life, instead it is designed to given the student a bump to help them catch up with their peers and then transition them back into Tier 1 instruction.

If a student is still not successful in Tier 2, then based on the data collected, the student may be moved to Tier 3, which is the most intense intervention for individual students. While Tier 2 instruction required an additional 30 minutes of instruction a minimum of 2-3 times per week, Tier 3 requires 60 minutes of additional instruction

every day (Howard, 2009; Buffum, Mattos, Weber 2009). While Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, McGraw 2009 don't agree with the amount of Tier 3 instructional time, they do agree that Tier 3 instruction needs to be much more intense and more often. Tier 3 should be in small groups of one-to-one instruction or no more than three students in a group. The interventions that had been used can continue to be used but the amount of time and intensity has to increase. Students in Tier 3 should also be progress monitored more frequently. During Tier 2 student progress was monitored once a week, when students reach Tier 3 their progress should be monitored at least twice a week (Howard, 2009; Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009). Some people question whether Tier 3 is part of special education, but according to Mary Howard (2009), Tier 3 is not part of special education but instead a safety net for students prior to being labeled as a special education student.

Another important component of the RtI process is progress monitoring. Progress monitoring is a term that is sometimes used in place of assessments; however, they are significantly different and give different information to teachers and students. The two different types of assessments are summative and formative. Since the enactment of No Child Left Behind the government has used assessment data to determine if teachers, schools and districts are meeting their predetermined goals. The high stakes summative assessments are a snapshot of what students know at a certain time of year. However, these assessments give the teachers little information about the students when the information is needed (McAlenney & McCabe 2012).

The real purpose of assessments should be to help guide the instruction of the teacher to help improve student achievement (Fuchs & Fuchs 2006). Formative

assessments are more frequent smaller assessments that give the teacher immediate information about what the student can do and what the student may need more instruction on. People often look at assessment as something that is separate from instruction and actually takes time away from instruction. Quality formative assessments are integrated into the everyday instruction and can come in a variety of ways, such as observation, questions, student interest inventories, verbal questioning, quizzes, etc (Fuchs & Fuch, 2006; Cicek, 2012; Howard, 2009).

Formative and summative assessments can sometimes be confused. Teachers label some assessments as formative assessments when they are really summative assessments. When a teacher gives an assessment that they feel is formative, but are using the assessment to get a grade they are really venturing into the realm of summative assessments (Howard 2009). The reason for this is that the teacher is looking to see how the student did and not using the information to guide their instruction. The main purpose of a formative assessment is for the teacher to monitor student progress along with monitoring the successfulness of the lesson taught. Formative assessments provide feedback to the teacher while learning is taking place throughout the instruction. Formative assessments are usually not graded instead they are a measure of the learning progress and recognize areas that need improvement in both learning and teaching. Assessments should be used to inform instruction and not to just document a score in a grade book. While summative assessments generally take place after the learning has occurred. Summative assessments provide feedback on the learning and teaching that has already taken place. When students take summative assessments they receive a grade, which indicates whether or not the student has learned the information or if the student

may need some additional instruction. Teachers can use summative assessment results to gauge the effectiveness of their instruction. In education it is important to use both formative and summative assessments as long as we know the purpose and use of each type of assessment. Both give us information that can help guide our future instruction, but the timing of the assessment is important (Howard 2009).

The two main types of assessments in RtI are universal screenings and progress monitoring. The universal screenings do not give teachers specific information on what the child can do, but can suggest that a child is struggling in certain areas. The universal screening is the start to identifying students who are at-risk or have learning difficulties (Hughes & Dexter, 2011). The use of universal screenings is one step to early identification of students who might struggle. The universal screenings are given three times a year to all students, and give teachers the opportunity to catch any concerns that they may have missed with their formative assessments in class. Universal screenings are an integral part of the RtI process, and allow educators the opportunity for early identification of students who are at-risk (Hughes & Dexter, 2011). Universal screenings can help guide teachers on the appropriate tier placement for students who need extra help (Cicek, 2012).

Progress monitoring is the other type of assessment used within the RtI model. There are several different ways that teachers can progress monitor students, and many of those are based on the research based curriculum that the district has decided to use. Since most companies who develop curriculum for schools also provide progress monitoring tools that match the curriculum that is being used. Progress monitoring provides several benefits including; increased learning due to more timely and focused

instruction, knowledgeable decisions about instruction, better communication among staff and with parents about student progress, higher expectations of students, more informed special education referrals, and documentation of student data (Cicek, 2012; Hughes & Dexter, 2011). Cicek (2012), Hughes and Dexter (2011), and McAlenney and McCabe (2012) believe that curriculum-based measurement (CBM) is one research based way of measuring student progress, as they have already had there reliability and validity addressed through the company. The curriculum-based measurement (CBM) gives the teachers regular feedback on the student's progress and provides valuable information to help guide further instruction. After the CBM, which usually lasts one to five minutes the teacher documents the score and tracks the student progress. If the student progress slows down or stops then the teacher will make a decision on whether or not to change the instructional technique or change the amount of time used for instruction. Teachers can also use other forms of progress monitoring such as fluency scores, sight word lists, comprehension questions along with other research-based programs such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) (Buffum, Mattos, Weber, 2009).

Effective Professional Development

As district leaders, building administration, and teachers begin to look at professional development for any new initiative they are going to implement they must first look at their organizational make up. Bolman and Deal are key researchers in the area of effective change in organizations. According to Bolman and Deal (2008) all organizations can be viewed from four different perspectives or frames; structural frame, human resource frame, political frame, and symbolic frame. Every person in the

organization has their own frame from which they view the organization, but it is important to be able to see the organization from other frames if change is going to be successful and sustainable throughout the organization.

The first frame is the structural frame, which as it indicates focuses on how the organization is set up and the roles of people within that organization. Structural frame people are focused on achieving goals and objectives, and believe that rationality is more important than human needs. People who see the organization from a structural frame believe that people should have roles within the organization and that there should be a division of labor with effective controls. However, with the division of labor there can be difficulties with coordination and people tend to focus on their specific role and lose their focus on the overall mission goal (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

The human resource frame value people's skills, energy, and commitment as a resource, and it is these resources that can make or break the organization. People who see the organization through the human resource frame believe that the organization exists to meet human needs, and people and organizations need each other to be successful. When individuals are able to find meaning in their work then the organization will succeed. However, if individuals needs and wants are not addressed then change initiatives will fail (Reeves, 2009). One of the criticism of the human resource frame is the organizational focus is more on people's needs then on the organization's vision, and sometimes people just need to do the job at hand (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Political frame people believe that every organization is full of political arenas focused on individual and group interests. The political frame perspective is that organizations are a coalition of interest groups each with their own perceptions of reality.

Political frame people view conflict as a central role of the organization with power being the most important resource. Decisions are made from bargaining and negotiating among the different stakeholders. Without understanding individuals beliefs or mental models change will fail (Dweck, 2006). Unfortunately, the political frame does not allow for much flexibility or honest communication (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

The final frame that Bolman and Deal (2008) discuss is the symbolic frame. People who see the organization from the symbolic frame believe that symbols are a part of that organization and are steeped in the history of the organization itself. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) believe the past is what shapes our ability to change for the future of our organization. Symbolic frame people don't look at what happened in an event, but want to know what it means. When change happens in an organization, symbolic frame people believe that it is more important what was expressed during the change then what produced as a result of the change. Sometimes people who see the organization from the symbolic frame get stuck in the traditions and the way things used to be done (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

It is important to understand all four frames people view an organization from because for change to be successful a leader or group of teachers have to be able to see the change needed from all perspectives. Once the leader or group of teachers has been able to see the changed needed from all perspective, then they must reframe the change to get buy-in from the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2008). According to Reeves (2010) systems thinking is an analysis of various parts of the organization and how those parts impact results. This can be seen in the Reeves Leadership and Learning Matrix. This matrix allows an educational institution to analyze measurable variables of teaching and

leadership that are associated with student achievement. Organizational results are typically student results. It is important for organizations to understand the results they are getting from the reframing of the organizational change they have implemented. Reeves divides the organizational results into four quadrants, which are important for the organization (school) to understand. The upper left quadrant is the lucky quadrant where the organization (school) gets good results, but does not understand why they got the results. The lower left quadrant is the losing quadrant where the organization is getting poor result and does not know why they are getting those results. In the upper right quadrant is the leading quadrant where organizations are getting good results and clearly understand their results. Finally, in the lower right quadrant or the learning quadrant organizations have poor results but understand why and will not repeat the same mistake (Reeves 2010). Understanding the frames from which educators see their organization and understanding the results of the organizational change are important to providing appropriate and effective professional development (Reeves, 2010).

The Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 required Missouri public schools to allocate one percent of revenue from the foundation formula towards professional development for their educators. Of the monies allocated, 75 percent had to be spent in the same fiscal year to meet the objectives in the each school's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. The objective of the professional development had to be tied directly to student and educator learning goals (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2013). Missouri Schools have adopted the goal of becoming one of the top ten schools by 2020. One of the objectives to obtain the goal of Top 10 By 20 states 'Missouri will prepare, develop and support effective educators" (Missouri Department of Elementary

and Secondary Education, 2012). According to Dufour, five components of effective professional development should include: (1) Driven by student achievement data, (2) Ensure adequate resources for implementation (3) Must be effectively led (4) Should energize teachers and (5) Linked to the evaluation system in schools (Dufour, 2004).

Technology can help leaders implement fidelity in professional development practices of policy development, change, advocacy, ethics, and supervision. One of Doug Reeves (2010) characteristics of quality professional learning is thorough observation teachers and teaching practices. Technology can support leaders in policy development through the use of referenced board policies, development and distribution of handbooks, communication through use of website and social media. Professional development can be provided for teachers and stakeholders regarding the use and development of these policies. Leadership can also use technology to implement change through use of data collection and surveys to initiate change. However, Doug Reeves (2010) states that professional development or professional learning must focus on student learning. Teachers must link gains in student learning with specific teaching strategies that are implemented after the professional learning of the teacher has taken place. Educators can advocate for their schools and viewpoints through the use of blogs, social media, and professional development through webinars and Skype. Project tomorrow found 25 percent of administrators and 39 percent of teachers maintain a professional networking site (Project Tomorrow, 2013).

Communication practices are also enhanced through the use of technology throughout school systems. Through the use of email, social media, and Skype educators can communicate with more efficiency and over long distances. One of the main

components of RtI is communication with all stakeholders, and technology gives us the avenue for that communication. The use of School Information Systems allows educators to collect and analyze data more effectively. Communication with parents and stakeholders can be utilized through notification systems. Youtube videos and Twitter help leaders advocated for their school programs. Teacher websites can help teachers, parents and students communicate effectively about class requirements. Increasing communication with stakeholders concerning learning processes can also be achieved through technology (Walker, 2012). If you are going to make the RtI framework the best that it can be, then communication among teachers, principals, interventionists, and parents is going to have to be frequent and timely.

The goal of becoming the Top 10 by 20 has led Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE) to implement the new Missouri Comprehensive Data System, which addresses data collection through technology. The new system collects accountability data for schools including student achievement, graduation rate, early childhood information, special education data, and college and career readiness information. Webinars have been provided for school leaders to aid in the implementation of the new data system (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, DESE, 2012).

Professional development can be achieved through the use of skype and webinars to promote learning theories. Professional learning communities for singleton teachers can be especially effectively through the use of technology. Project Tomorrow reports 45 percent of administrators and 37 percent of teachers participate in an online Professional Learning Community (Project Tomorrow, 2013). While many professional educators

focus on improving the curriculum to improve student learning, Doug Reeves (2010) believes that schools should focus on educators and their teaching practices. Professional development is a waste if teachers are not implementing what they have learned in the daily practices.

In addition to skype and webinars, social media has helped to further the digital revolution of professional development and learning. The social media site Twitter allows users to connect with members of similar interests. Members connect and share their insights in 140 characters or less. Within the 140 characters hyperlinks to websites can be imbedded helping users connect to new knowledge. Within a tweet a user can add what's called a hashtag, which allows tweets to be categorized. Once a tweet has a hashtag and is categorized it can be searched. Users can search for specific phrases using the hashtag. This allows users to find chats and articles to further their professional development. Users can even follow the RtI Network, which offers a wealth of knowledge and individual professional learning opportunities.

Through the use of Twitter, users follow people they have an interest in. By following users who tweet about education, technology and professional development one begins to build their Personal Learning Network or PLN. PLN's connect people from across the world and allow individuals to share ideas without ever having to meet or be in the same room. Building a strong PLN can provide hours of ongoing and free professional development. Twitter, skype and webinars are all examples of how technology is revolutionizing learning and professional development.

Learning theories and effective teacher practices can be enhanced through the use of technology. According to a study completed at Utah State University, a link between

effective teacher practice and student learning and engagement was established using technology. This was most effective for teachers that received substantial professional development using technology (Walker, 2012). Online curriculum services and technologies have been developed to help educators ensure student achievement goals are tracked and met.

The National Staff Development Council now known as the Learning Forward Organization has started using the term Professional Learning in place of Professional Development in an attempt to change the focus of learning for teachers from top-down approach to a collaborative approach where teachers are responsible for their own learning ("MSDC," n.d.: "Standards," n.d.). The focus of collaboration between and among teachers and administrators is a shift in thinking, and is meant to focus teacher learning on strategies that will be most useful in helping students perform better in the classroom.

School district today must provide effective professional development for their teachers. This professional development is essential for the sustainability and success of the organization. Furthermore, professional development is key for substantial success of its students, especially in RtI. The term Professional learning is used to describe Effective Professional Development today ("MSDC," n.d.: "Standards," n.d.). Modernized Professional Development, Professional Learning as it will be referred to, is collaborative, uses data to make decisions, and at the core has a concentrated focus on student achievement. National standards for professional development have been implemented in order ensure the quality of professional development taking place

(Learning Forward, 2012). Additionally, multiple sources of research about professional development support the effectiveness of quality professional development.

Professional development, in its earliest use, focused on quick fix, one-time workshops. At this level, educators attended the workshops then returned to the classroom, without collaborating or sharing any of their new learning. Administration often provided the professional development, or sent teachers to workshops based on their own needs and interests. Professional development was haphazard and lacked focus to say the least. There was no clear evaluation of results regarding the professional development on student achievement.

Professional development has evolved in that collaboration with other educators is promoted, and the use of data to aid in the necessary decisions to make adequate gains. Additionally, the evaluation of the professional development is based upon student achievement. Collaboration and data driven decisions, are some of the most effective methods of providing professional development for teachers ("MSDC" n.d.; "Standards," n.d.).

What exactly constitutes professional development along with educators need for professional development has been a focal point in the field of education for many years. The value of professional development in Missouri schools is expressed in the Missouri Excellence in Education Act of 1985,and the 2005 Missouri Senate Bill 287. Each of which require that resources be designated to professional development in school systems (MO PD Guidelines, 2008). Missouri requires teachers to receive a set number of professional development hours annually depending on their certification level in their careers (Required PD, 2012).

Professional Development throughout education has been left up to interpretation as what exactly is being obtained through the professional development time, and the definition of professional development continues to change as the focus on professional development increases. In addition to the changes in the definition of professional development, the name for Professional Development was change to Professional Learning, by the Learning Forward organization. The reason for the change to Professional Learning was to change the focus from a top-down approache to a collaborative and personal approach to professional development ("MSDC," n.d.; "Standards," n.d.).

In the third revision of the professional development standards by The Learning Forward organization, the focus has shifted to a personal approach with collaboration as opposed to the top down approach of past professional development. It empowers the teacher by building a collaborative relationship with the administration where as a team they focus on the improving individual instruction to improve the organization. Teachers and administrators collaborate to determine which of these learning strategies are best suited to ensure the greatest impact on student achievement within the classroom. The term Professional Learning ultimately shifts the focus on teacher learning rather then training (Learning Forward, 2012).

The Standards for Professional Learning written by the Learning Forward organization, which works with schools, state and federal government to provides services and support, are focused on seven areas ("Standards," n.d.). These include learning communities, skillful leadership, available resources, decision-making based on data, professional learning based on research, the long term change of professional

learning and the alignment of teacher performance with student results (LearningForward Reference, n.d.; "Crosswalk," 2011). For professional learning to be high quality each one of the Standards for Professional Learning must play a integral role in the professional learning.

The Learning communities strand focuses on a collaborative culture where teachers hold each other accountable for increased student results to meet the school goals. In the Learning Forward Standard of leadership the goal is for shared leadership among the organization through professional learning, understanding of the Learning Forward Standards and supporting school improvements to improve student results. Inside the resource standard, the allocation of resources for professional learning and the implementation of resources to support the learning in the classroom are essential for improvements in classroom instruction and improved student learning. The use of multiple pieces of data including formative and summative assessments enriches the comprehensive examination of teacher, student and school performance, which is the key component of the data standard (Learning Forward, 2012).

The standard of Learning Designs requires the use of high-quality, research based best practices of professional learning to be used to improve classroom instruction. Through the increased use of technology collaboration has extended beyond the school building, and differentiated learning designs abound for professional learning. The Implementation Standard focuses on change in teacher instruction through collaboration and implementation of new learning and the impact it has on student learning. The strand that focuses on outcomes is geared towards the integration of curriculum and teacher performance standards, and ties student learning to the professional learning of teachers.

Educators should effectively apply their learning to classroom instruction for the increased results of all students, and should track student-learning outcomes through multiple sources of data (LearningForward, 2012).

Effective professional development or professional learning is essential in the improvement of student achievement. Professional learning needs to be job-embedded, focused on students, collaborative in nature, and ongoing (Beglau et al., 2011). For professional learning to be successful educators must be intrinsically motivated, and supported by administration in their efforts to improve instruction. While it is important for educators to take ownership of their own professional learning, sometimes administrators need send teachers to professional development that pushes them out of their comfort zone for the professional development to be effective. Since teachers are the most important piece of student success in the classroom, it is important that time and money be allocated for them to receive research based, high-quality professional development (Devaney, 2012).

Professional development or professional learning should not be done in isolation, but instead should be collaborative and leaders should allot time in the day for collaboration (Reeves, 2009). Professional learning should be focused on student learning results, ongoing, and collaborative (Reeves, 2010; Locke, 2012). One way that collaborative professional learning can be accomplished is through the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLC), which is being implemented in schools throughout the country. One of the effective strategies for school improvement is a focus on the processes of adult learning, which will push students to learn at a higher level (Marzano & Dufour, 2011).

Building teacher leadership through professional learning is another important step in improving organizational improvement and student achievement results. However, according to Reeves (2010) there are four barriers that schools must overcome for teacher leadership to be effectively implemented. Schools are generally hierarchical in nature with a top down approach to learning, but schools can improve on their culture through effective networks and open communication. The next barrier to shared leadership is compliance, which can be overcome through shared accountability and effective documentation of student learning. The third barrier according to Reeves (2010) is shooting the messenger. Leaders need to be able to be open minded enough to the opposition point of view and consider the view that a different course of action could be beneficial to the improvement of the organization. Respect is the final barrier to teacher leadership. Respect can be shown to teachers by allowing them to be involved in the professional learning rather then being consumers of the learning (Reeves, 2010).

With appropriate and timely professional development schools can increase fidelity of implementation throughout their school. When implementing any curriculum, program, or framework it is important to implement with fidelity. Implementation with fidelity is using your resources and instructional practices in a way that is consistent and accurate with the way it was intended or with the professional development that was given. The reason that fidelity is so important is because it will help educators understand why students are successful or not (Abbott & Wills, 2012; Beecher, 2010). If a teacher is not implementing with fidelity, then student failure could be due to poor or inconsistent instruction instead of the students' poor response to the instruction. Many jobs have a checklist of things that need to be done or a job description, which is like a checklist of

duties that need to be performed (Mellard, 2010). Education is no different and the education of students should not be different. Teachers need to have checklist of items that they make sure that they are meeting with each student to ensure that they are teaching with fidelity (Abbott & Wills, 2012).

There are several things that may be difficult for schools when addressing implementing fidelity throughout the school. Schools need to look at fidelity on the surface level of the school but also at a deeper cultural level of the school. Some of the surface level changes that may need to be made would include the vision, mission, goals, or structure of the school (Mellard, 2010). Even if these changes are not needed that at least need to be addressed and communicated to all staff on a regular basis. If a school does not have buy-in with the mission or vision of the school then it is going to be difficult to have fidelity with the other aspects that will need to be addressed. The next level of change is often more difficult because that involve changes to the culture of the school, and include things such as individual values and beliefs, norms, traditions, and even leadership (Mellard, 2010). These often take a longer time to address and are more difficult to make long lasting change. Changes that need to be addressed will have to be a priority for the school. You cannot implement a curriculum, program, or framework, and then work on the climate and culture of the building. Once the climate and cultural fidelity is in place the changes in curriculum, programs, or frameworks will come much easier and with more support (Abbott & Wills, 2012; Mellard, 2010).

Educators should look at five key elements when trying to determine the level of fidelity within their school. Faculties should first look at adherence, which determines how well teachers are following the curriculum, interventions, and instructional practices,

basically are you sticking to the plan that is in place, which would include the plan for RtI(Mellard, 2010). The next key element of fidelity is duration and exposure; this is where you track the length of the intervention. Teachers want to make sure that students are receiving the appropriate amount of time for their intervention on a regular basis throughout RtI (Abbott & Wills, 2012; Barnes & Harlacher, 2008; Mellard, 2010). Quality of delivery is the next key element in which the staff or administrator determines if the staff is excited about the intervention, is the staff engaged, if the student is engaged, and whether or not the instruction was strategic in meeting students needs through RtI (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2012). An area that could create problems would be program specificity, because teachers want to add to or delete from the original agreed upon curriculum or intervention, and there is never one resource that will meet all student needs in RtI. The final element that the staff needs to consider, but probably the most important element is student responsiveness. With the correct assessments and progress monitoring tools student responsiveness can be tracked throughout their intervention in RtI, or for the classroom teacher you can focus on student engagement in the lesson (Abbott & Wills, 2012; Barnes & Harlacher, 2008; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Keller-Margulis, 2012; Mellard, 2010).

When educators look at fidelity of implementation within the school and specifically within the RtI framework they are going to have to look at each component of the RtI framework. Educators will have to look at the assessment system and if it informs them about students or are at-risk, and whether or not those students are making progress towards their grade level objectives (Barnes & Harlacher, 2008). Educators will also have to make sure that the curriculum is research based and is connected throughout

the classroom and the different small groups and tiers. Teachers will review their instructional practices to make sure that they are research based and that they have had the proper professional development to do it correctly. Teachers will also have to ensure that there are checks in place to make sure that they are teaching with fidelity, by using agreed upon vocabulary and procedures (Abbott and Wills, 2012). Since RtI is closely tied to classroom instruction, it is important make sure that classroom practices in the classroom and Tier I are going well or the other two tiers are going to struggle as well. In Tier I it is important that teachers are implementing the curriculum and assessments in a consistent and accurate manner, as these interventions are less prescribed. As students get to Tier 2 and Tier 3 the interventions are more prescribed and often come with a checklist of items that should be taught, so checking on fidelity is actually a little bit easier in these tiers (Mellard, 2010).

Since fidelity of implementation is so important it is vital that a school have a plan for completing fidelity checks. This can be accomplished through student surveys, staff surveys, walkthroughs, fidelity checklists, student work, and obviously though constant staff communication (Mellard, 2010; Mellard, McKnight, Jordan, 2010). Students and staff surveys will give you feedback on curriculum, interventions, and interventionists. Walkthrough information will give administrators and staff members first hand knowledge of what is being done in the classroom or intervention room. Fidelity checklists allow the staff the opportunity to have a cheat sheet of curriculum or instructional expectation as a guide (Abbott & Wills, 2012). Student work should be shared among grade level teachers and interventionist to help ensure that all staff has the same expectations of student work. Communication is the key to successful

implementation with fidelity. Staffs have to feel comfortable that the information gathered will be used to improve their instruction, and not as a gotcha tool to get rid of staff members (Abbott & Wills, 2012).

Summary

This chapter was a culmination of research about Response to Intervention. The chapter was divided into three sections history of special education, components of response to intervention, and professional development. In the section of history of special education literature was reviewed to provide a timeline for special education and how it led to the involvement of response to intervention in the special education process. The section on components of response to intervention discusses the different literature available on various models of response to intervention. That section also discusses the different parts of all RtI models so that RtI can be successful at meeting students needs. The final section over professional development discusses the importance of quality professional development and the changed focus from professional development to professional learning. Fidelity of implementation is also discussed in that final section of the review of literature.

Chapter Three will provide the participants, sampling procedures, research design, instrumentation, and statistical treatment of data in the quantitative data. Chapter Four presents the descriptive and inferential statistics, respondent's comments, and the data analysis, with conclusions, limitations, and recommendations to follow in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the process used to look at teacher perceptions of professional development, available resource, and fidelity of implementation of RtI, and the impact they have on teachers perceptions of whether or not they have a successful RtI program. The researcher addressed the methodology of the research study along with the validity and reliability of the survey instrument to ensure that the information received was useful for educators. The purpose of this study is to determine if professional development, available resources and fidelity of implementation may impede successful implementation of RtI. Every new program that is implemented in schools has obstacles that need to be addressed and overcome for the program to be successful. Response to Intervention is another one of those programs or frameworks that could be successful if educators are aware of the possible obstacles that need to be addressed for successful implementation.

This quantitative study focused on the success of the implementation of RtI based on teacher perception of the process measured by professional development, available resources and fidelity of implementation. Response to Intervention has become an important part of the educational landscape today, however most of the literature describes Response to Intervention, how it is important, and the key components. Little research has been done about perceptions of RtI and the fidelity of implementation. This research will add to the body of research by looking at teacher perceptions and their relationship to fidelity of implementation.

A quantitative methodology was chosen to help explain the relationship between successful implementation and teacher perceptions along with the impact it may have on fidelity of implementation. A survey design was used to determine teacher perceptions towards RtI and the impact that those attitudes may have on implementing RtI with fidelity. The survey data was collected anonymously from thirteen Central Ozarks Conference schools. This survey focused on elementary schools within those thirteen school districts. These schools were selected for their proximity to the researcher and the ability to do follow up studies and observations if the researcher so chooses.

The survey data was collected anonymously using Question Pro during the 2014-2015 school year. Question Pro is an on-line tool that allows the researcher to create and collect surveys electronically. The survey was sent out to all elementary teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference after getting final approval from the RRB committee. The survey was sent out to everyone at the same time with a timeline of two weeks to return the survey, then a reminder email was sent and respondents were given an additional week if they had not completed the survey. Any surveys returned after the timeline will be used to help the researcher further his understanding, but will not be used in the data tables or conclusions.

Participants

The participants of this study were elementary school teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference (COC). Elementary for this study will include students in grade Kindergarten through Sixth grade. There are currently 13 different school districts in the COC conference, which gave the researcher a sample size of 1, 590 teachers who were asked to take the survey tool. The COC conference is divided up into large and small

school divisions and all schools in both divisions will be surveyed. Surveying both small and large schools within the COC conference gave the researcher a better representation of Missouri schools.

The respondents in this survey were all certified teachers; 314 of the respondents were regular classroom teachers, 49 were specials teachers including Music, Physical Education, Art, Computer, and Library, 50 special education teachers, and 45 Title One teachers, along with 10 respondents who did not indicate their specific certified role. Respondents were also asked which grade level they taught and the results were varied across several different grade configurations: 37.4 percent taught in a K-2 school, 22 percent taught in a 3-4 school, 16.9 percent taught in a 5-6 school, 14 percent taught in a K-4 school, 6.9 percent taught in a K-6 school, and 2.8 percent taught in a 3-6 school. Finally, the respondents were asked about there educational background 40 percent had a Bachelors degree, 51 percent had a Master's degree, seven percent had a Specialist degree, and only two percent had a Doctorate degree. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data and will be used throughout to give insight to responses given in the RtI survey.

Sampling Procedure

This survey was piloted with an elementary school in southwest Missouri. This group was chosen because of the make up of the school. The school is made up of two teachers from each grade level in kindergarten through fourth grade. Carterville Elementary has three special education teachers and two Title 1 teachers. This group of educators is representative of the group of teachers that were surveyed by the researcher. Carterville Elementary School is currently implementing the RtI program, which should

allow them the expertise to provide feedback about the questions used in the survey. Carterville Elementary is in close proximity to the researcher, which provides the opportunity to visit the school and ask follow up questions to improve the validity and reliability of the survey instrument. The researcher also piloted the survey tool with an expert panel, which will include the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum in the Webb City R-7 School District, the Special Education Director of the Webb City R-7 School District, and a Professional Development expert at the Southwest Center for Educational Excellence. The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum was chosen as an expert panel member because of his work with curriculum including RtI. The Special Education Director was chosen because of her expertise and background knowledge of the special education process and how it ties to RtI. Also chosen for the expert panel was a member of the Southwest Center for Educational Excellence, which is a center designed to provide high-quality professional development to area educators, she was chosen because of her involvement in professional development and training to area schools in many different areas including RtI. The purpose of the pilot group and expert panel is to check for the Validity and Reliability of the survey tool, as well as improve wording of questions and or rewrite any unclear questions.

On September 2, 2014 the researcher sent the survey to the pilot group and expert panel with the communicated expectation for them to take the survey and provide feedback about the survey. The purpose of sending out the survey to the pilot group was to determine the validity and reliability of the survey instrument. The pilot group commented on the questions sounding redundant or similar questions being asked but one being positive and the other being negative. The pilot group was able to determine the

three main themes that the research was trying to ask questions about. The pilot group also commented on how they would like a text box to be able to explain why they answered the questions the way they did.

The researcher also met with each member of the expert panel to discuss the content validity of the survey instrument. Some questions were reworded and were refocused to help delineate the topics and connect the topics for better research results. The expert panel all agreed that the survey was focused on the purpose of the paper, but that the wording needed to be improved. After rewriting the questions to improve wording and eliminate redundancy the researcher took the survey back to the expert panel for another review. Again, the researcher met with each member of the expert panel individually. Two of the members of the panel agreed that the survey looked ready to go to research, but the third member felt like the open ended question needed to be adjusted to allow more freedom to responded. After making those adjustments the third expert also agreed that depending on the approval of the researcher's committee members, that he felt like the survey was ready to be sent out. The research committee and expert panel agreed that the survey had face validity.

Research Design

After reviewing the available literature on RtI it was clear that not all RtI models are as successful as others. The research decided to focus on three important implementation factors that can determine the success of a program. The three implementation factors of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation could also be generalized to other programs, which could impact more then just Response to Intervention.. There is little research that is focused on teacher

perception of RtI. This information could be useful to schools that are trying to implement RtI in their buildings, because it will give insight into perceptions of teachers and allow schools to address those perceptions to improve success of implementation.

The researcher conducted quantitative research on teacher perception of professional development, fidelity of implementation, and available resources and the impact that it has on teacher perceptions of RtI. Using a series of questions on a Likert Scale along with response questions to determine perception the research will provide valuable information to help with the implementation of the RtI framework.

The survey was sent out to all elementary teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference after obtaining final approval from the RRB committee. In November 2014 the survey was sent to all elementary teachers in the COC conference at the same time with a timeline of two weeks to return the survey. The researcher received 350 completed surveys after the two weeks timeline. After two weeks the research sent out a reminder email allowing one more week for responses. At the end of that week the researcher had 499 responses, which gave a confidence level of 95 percent and a return rate of 31 percent. The researcher decided to end the survey because the confidence level had been reached. The survey data was collected anonymously using Question Pro during the 2014-2015 school year. Question Pro is an on-line tool that allows the researcher to create and collect surveys electronically.

Of the 1,590 possible responses 497 responded to the survey. Of the 497 actual responses 468 or 94 percent currently participate in RtI and were used in the study, while 29 respondents answered they did not participate in Response to Intervention. The 29 respondents who answered they did not participate in RtI were directed to a thank you

page and did not answer any further questions about the RtI model. While the 468 respondents who answered they did participate in RtI were directed to a bank of questions about their perceptions of success of the RtI program, the professional development provided for RtI, the available resources within RtI, and the fidelity of implementation of RtI within their school.

Instrumentation

The instrument (appendix B) used for this research was researcher designed. There has been little research conducted on the perception of teachers and administrators, therefore a new survey instrument was designed. By developing a new survey the researcher was able to focus questions on teacher perceptions and fidelity of implementation. The survey instrument will also allow the researcher to be able to draw some conclusion as to why the perceptions are positive or negative and ways to improve perception to improve fidelity of implementation. This information is important for administrators and other school leaders, because it will allow them the opportunity to address concerns or setbacks when implementing RtI.

Statistical Treatment of Data

This quantitative study is being implemented to test three null hypotheses:

1. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the professional development provided.

2. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not

successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the available resources provided.

3. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of fidelity of implementation.

Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistical analysis will be used to test the three null hypotheses and the results will be applied to the larger population. The researcher will use a one-way MANOVA test along with a Tukey HSD post hoc test to determine the mean, standard deviation and confidence interval to test for statistical significance. The researcher will also use a one-way ANOVA test to look deeper at the results of the MANOVA test, which will help in the explanation of the results. The survey questions were divided into different areas, with the first area focused on teacher perceptions of the success of RtI. The next area of focus was teacher perceptions of professional development provided for RtI, which was the focus of four different questions throughout the survey. Teacher perceptions of available resources for RtI were the next focus area and it also had four different questions throughout the survey. The final area of focus was teacher perceptions of fidelity of implementation, and again there were four questions focus on fidelity of implementation.

Summary

The development of a quality survey instrument requires a well-planned pilot process with experts to help guide the development. The resulting survey in this research followed that plan and the information received from that survey was reliable and valid in

the discussions of RtI and teachers perceptions of RtI. The survey focused on teacher perceptions of whether RtI was successful or not along with teacher perceptions of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation within RtI.

Chapter Four presents the descriptive and inferential statistics, respondent's comments, and the data analysis involved in the quantitative study. Chapter Five will provide conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The survey results were compiled and the results were uploaded into the SPSS software program. Of the 1,590 possible responses 497 responded to the survey. Of the 497 actual responses 468 or 94 percent currently participate in RtI and were used in the study, while 29 respondents answered they did not participate in Response to Intervention. The 29 respondents who answered they did not participate in RtI were directed to a thank you page and did not answer any further questions about the RtI model. While the 468 respondents who answered they did participate in RtI were directed to a bank of questions about their perceptions of success of the RtI program, the professional development provided for RtI, the available resources within RtI, and the fidelity of implementation of RtI within their school.

The survey used (appendix B) had four themes, which will be focused on throughout the data analysis. The first theme was teacher perception of success of the RtI program, which was report on scale from 1.00-4.00 where 1.00= Strongly disagree and 4.00= Strongly agree. The next theme was teacher perception of professional development in RtI, which contained four questions on the same scale of 1.00-4.00. However, the four individual questions were reported together in a group, which we will refer to as professional development, since we combined the questions into a group the mean for responses will range from 4.00-16.00 where 4.00= Strongly disagree and 16.00= Strongly agree. The third theme of the survey was teacher perception of available resources within the RtI program. The available resources theme will follow the same

scale as professional development and responses will range from 4.00-16.00. The final theme of the survey is teacher perception of fidelity of implementation in RtI, and responses will range from 4.00-16.00.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 below shows the number of response to the question of is RtI successful in meeting student needs.

Table 1
Survey Overall Results for Success of Response to Intervention

Survey Question	Scale	Number of Responses
Response to Intervention is successful in meeting individual academic needs of students.	1.00	13
	2.00	38
	3.00	307
	4.00	110

The responses of teachers to the question of a successful RtI program indicate the majority of teachers agree RtI is successful in meeting student needs. There were 417 teachers or 89 percent who responded they agreed or strongly agreed that RtI was successful in their school, as opposed to 51 teachers or 11 percent who responded they disagreed or strongly disagreed that RtI was successful in their school. The results of this question are important to further understand the analysis of the data presented in this chapter. Teachers agree with the success of the RtI program and it appeared they felt it was successful in meeting student academic needs. These results will be compared using a one-way MANOVA with teacher perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation in the next tables.

Table 2 below shows the category, scale, mean, standard deviation and number of respondents. The figures for the descriptive statistics are based upon four questions each

in the categories of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation. The scale number of how teachers responded to success of RtI is given along with the mean and standard deviation of each category based on how people responded to the success of RtI.

Table 2: Comparison of Scale of RtI to Mean of Professional Development, Available Resources, and Fidelity of Implementation

Dependent Variables	Scale	Mean	SD	n
Professional Development	1.00	12.46	3.18	13
	2.00	08.45	1.66	38
	3.00	11.16	1.74	307
	4.00	13.02	2.08	110
	Total	11.41	2.21	468
Available Resources	1.00	12.15	3.46	13
	2.00	08.74	1.84	38
	3.00	11.77	1.47	307
	4.00	13.66	1.86	110
	Total	11.98	2.09	468
Fidelity of Implementation	1.00	11.00	3.37	13
	2.00	08.71	1.96	38
	3.00	11.41	1.90	307
	4.00	13.55	1.94	110
	Total	11.69	2.34	468

Note. SD= Standard Deviation,

The mean score is the combination of four questions based on a scale score from 1.00-4.00, by combining the question the range of the mean is 4.00-16.00 where 4.00= Strongly disagree and 16.00= Strongly agree. In the category of professional development for the teachers who strongly disagreed they had a successful RtI program the mean score was 12.46, which indicates while teachers did not feel like they had a successful RtI program they had a positive overall view of the professional development they received for RtI. It is interesting to note that people who had a strong negative perception of RtI still believe the professional development was positive. However, the standard deviation was 3.18, which indicates it was not a normal distribution in the bell

curve in the responses of those 13 individual respondents. The respondents who disagreed they had a successful RtI program appeared to have a more negative response to the professional development they receive with a mean score of 8.45 indicating a slightly negative view. The standard deviation for teachers who disagree with the having a successful RtI program was 1.66, which indicates there was a much smaller variance in the answers given to the survey on professional development. Teachers who responded they agreed or strongly agreed they had a successful RtI program appeared to indicate a positive perception of professional development for RtI. There was a mean score of 11.16 for those teachers who agreed they had a successful RtI program, and a mean score of 13.02 for teachers who strongly agreed they had a successful RtI program. While the standard deviation for both agree and strongly agree was 2.09 and 2.21 respectively, which is a larger variance of answers this could be due to the number of respondents as there were 307 and 110 respectively.

In the category of available resources, teachers who strongly disagreed with the success of RtI in their school had a mean score of 12.15, which suggests while they do not feel RtI was successful they did feel like they had the available resources for RtI. Standard deviation was outside the normal distribution again at 3.46, which indicates that it was not a normal distribution in the bell curve and would suggest there was a large variance in the response of those 13 individuals. The teachers who responded they disagreed with the success of RtI were also more negative in their response to available resources, which had a mean score of 8.74. Teachers who responded they agreed or strongly agreed with the success of RtI in their school also responded positive to the available resources with a mean score of 11.77 and 13.66 respectively. The mean

response for all respondents was 11.98, which indicates that overall there was a positive perception by teachers of the resources available for RtI.

The third category of fidelity of implementation was also compared to teacher perception of the success of RtI. Teachers who strongly disagreed RtI was successful in their school had a mean score of 11.00, which indicates while teachers did not feel like RtI was successful they had a somewhat positive perception of fidelity of implementation. While teachers had a positive perception of fidelity of implementation in the RtI program it is important to note this was the lowest mean of the three categories of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation. The standard deviation was 3.37, which indicates that there is a large variance in the response of those who strongly disagree with success of RtI in the category of fidelity of implementation. The teacher perceptions that disagreed RtI was successful in their school had the lowest mean of 8.71 on their perception of fidelity of implementation. It appears if teachers disagreed with the success of RtI, then they had a slightly negative perception of fidelity of implementation of RtI. Teachers who responded they agreed or strongly agreed with the success of RtI in their school also responded positively toward fidelity of implementation of RtI throughout their school. Teachers who agreed had a mean score of 11.42, while teachers who strongly agreed had a mean score of 13.55, which indicates both groups of teachers had a slightly positive perception of fidelity of implementation with the strongly agree teachers have a more positive outlook of fidelity of implementation.

To help fully understand the descriptive statistics gathered through the survey it is important to look at the other demographic information received. Respondents were

asked how many years of experience they had as an educator and the results were balanced: 22 percent had 0-5 years of experience, 22 percent had 6-10 years, 19 percent had 11-15 years, 17 percent had 16-20 years, and 20 percent had 20 plus year of experience. While there was a large discrepancy in the question of what is the highest degree you hold: 40 percent had a Bachelors degree, 51 percent had a Master's degree, seven percent had a Specialist degree, and only two percent had a Doctorate degree. Respondents were also asked which grade level they taught and the results were varied across several different grade configurations: 37.4 percent taught in a K-2 school, 22 percent taught in a 3-4 school, 16.9 percent taught in a 5-6 school, 14 percent taught in a K-4 school, 6.9 percent taught in a K-6 school, and 2.8 percent taught in a 3-6 school. Teachers were finally asked what type of classroom they taught: 68.3 percent taught in a regular education classroom, 10.7 percent taught in a specials classroom (Music, PE, Art, Computer, Lbrary), 11 percent taught in a Special Education classroom, and 10 percent taught in a Title I classroom.

After reviewing the descriptive statistics there were some numbers, which were interesting, but may require a deeper look to fully understand. First, the group of teachers who strongly disagreed with the success of RtI in their school rated professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation slightly positive with fidelity of implementation being the lowest mean of 11.00. However, all three had a high standard deviation, which could be because the group was so small or perhaps there wasn't a consensus on why the RtI program was not successful. Also, interesting to note was the overwhelming majority of respondents (417) of the 468 teachers who were implementing RtI either agreed or strongly agreed RtI was successful at meeting students

academic needs. Of the 468 respondents who follow some sort of RtI model 2.7 percent strongly disagreed they had a successful RtI program, 8.2 percent disagreed they had a successful RtI program, while 65.6 percent agreed they had a successful RtI program, and 23.5 percent strongly agreed they had a successful RtI program.

Inferential Statistics

The inferential statistics below were computed using 12 total questions divided into three different categories, then compared to a fourth category of success of RtI in meeting students academic needs. Data from these questions was analyzed to determine if there was statistical significance in mean differences. The first multivariate test completed was the Wilks' Lambda, which was used to test the three null hypothesis: 1) There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the professional development provided. 2) There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the available resources provided.
3) There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of fidelity of implementation. After running a one-way MANOVA it revealed there was a significant relationship between the independent variable of teacher perception of a successful RtI program and the dependent variables of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation, Wilks' $\lambda = .592$, F (9, 1124.537) = 30.01, $p < .001$, partial eta

squared =1.00. Because the MANOVA was significant it is important to look at the test of between-subjects effects in Table 3.

Table 3: Test of Between-Subjects Effects for Success of RtI and Professional Development, Available Resources, and Fidelity of Implementation

Source	DV	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	PD	3	217.382	61.915	.000	.286
	AR	3	242.004	85.670	.000	.356
	FI	3	249.611	64.429	.000	.294
Intercept	PD	1	17584.285	5008.40	.000	.915
	AR	1	18561.963	6570.96	.000	.934
	FI	1	17272.532	4458.37	.000	.906
Response to Intervention is successful at meeting student academic needs	PD	3	217.382	61.915	.000	.286
	AR	3	242.004	85.670	.000	.356
	FI	3	249.611	64.429	.000	.294
Error	PD	464	3.511			
	AV	464	2.825			
	FI	464	3.874			

Note. DV= Dependent Variable; PD= Professional Development; AR= Available Resources; FI= Fidelity of Implementation

As Table 3 indicates there was a significant difference found between the independent variable of teacher perception of a successful RtI program and the dependent variable of teacher perception of professional development, $F(3,464)= 61.915$, $p < .001$. There was also indication there was a significant difference between teacher perception of success of RtI and teacher perception of available resources, $F(3,464)= 85.670$, $p <.001$. Finally, Table 3 indicated there was a significant difference between teacher perception of a successful RtI program and teacher perception of fidelity of implementation, $F(3,464)= 64.429$, $p < .001$. After reviewing the between-subjects effects results all three null hypotheses were rejected.

After completing the MANOVA test and the between-subjects effects test a post hoc test called the Tukey HSD was conducted. The Tukey HSD post hoc test was run to compare the results within groups to determine if there was a significant difference within the three dependent variables of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation and how they answered the independent variable of success of RtI. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated the mean score for strongly disagree with the success of RtI (M= 12.46, SD= 3.18) was significantly different than the disagree with the success of RtI (M= 8.45, SD= 1.66) with *p*= .000. However, the strongly disagree with the success of RtI did not significantly differ from agree with the success of RtI (M= 11.16, SD= 1.74) or strongly agree with the success of RtI (M= 13.01, SD= 2.09) within the dependent variable of professional development. The comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated there was significant differences between disagree with success of RtI and agree (*p*= .000) and strongly agree (*p*= .000) with the success of RtI in professional development. The Tukey HSD test also indicated a significant difference between agree and strongly agree with the success of RtI (*p*= .000). Teachers who strongly disagreed with the success of RtI had much more favorable perception of professional development then teachers who only disagreed with the success of RtI. Perhaps it is due to the total number of respondents (13) who responded they strongly disagree with the success of RtI and a larger standard deviation (3.18), which means there was a large variance in responses, so a couple of outliers could have skewed the data.

The Tukey HSD test was also run to compare the success of RtI within the dependent variable of available resources. The mean score for strongly disagree with the

success of RtI (M= 12.15, SD= 3.46) indicated a significant difference with disagree with the success of RtI (M= 8.74, SD= 1.84) and strongly agree with the success of RtI (M= 13.66, SD= 1.86) with a *p*= .000 and *p*= .012 respectively. The mean score for disagree with the success of RtI indicated a significant difference between strongly disagree, agree, and strongly agree *p*= .000 for all three. Finally, the mean score for agree with the success of RtI (M=11.77, SD= 1.47) indicated a significant difference with strongly agree with the success of RtI *p*= .000. Again the teacher perceptions that strongly disagreed with the success of RtI in their building had a more favorable perception of available resources then the teachers whose perception only disagree with the success of RtI.

Another Tukey HSD test was run to compare the success of RtI within the dependent variable of fidelity of implementation. The mean score for strongly disagree with the success of RtI (M=11.00, SD= 3.37) indicated a significant difference with disagree with the success of RtI (M= 8.71, SD= 1.96) *p*= .002, and strongly agree (M= 13.55, SD= 1.94) *p*= .000. Again the mean score for disagree with the success of RtI indicated a significant difference with agree with the success of RtI (M= 11.42, SD= 1.90) *p*= .000, and strongly agree. There was also an indication of significant differences between agree and strongly agree with the success of RtI. These results indicated teachers who had a strongly negative perception of the success of RtI where more favorable in their perception of fidelity of implementation then teachers who had negative perception of RtI. Teachers who disagreed with the success of RtI had the least favorable perception of fidelity of implementation.

Overall, after looking at the data there appeared to be a trend that ran through all of the dependent variables. Teachers perception of strongly disagree with the success of

RtI generally had a more positive perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation with fidelity of implementation having the overall lowest perception. However, after looking at the individual responses of the 13 teachers who strongly disagreed with the success of RtI it appeared that 2 of the respondents may have skewed the numbers giving most 4 (strongly agree) score in all of the dependent variables. While teachers who responded they disagreed with the success of RtI had the least favorable perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation with professional development having the lowest perception from teachers. Teachers who responded that they strongly agreed with the success of RtI also had the most favorable perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

Table 4: ANOVA for Available Resources and Years of Service

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value
Between Groups	44.69	4	11.17	2.62	.034*
Within Groups	1967.24	462	4.26		
Total	2011.92	466			

Note. *= $p < .05$

For available resources there was a statistically significant difference between those teachers who had been in education 6-10 years and those who have been in education 16-20 years, $F(4, 462) = 2.62$, $p < .05$. When the Tukey Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test was performed, teachers who had taught 16-20 years were found to have a significantly less favorable perception of available resources than teachers who had taught for 6-10 years. There was no significant difference found between any of the other years in education.

Table 5: ANOVA for Available Resources and Grade Level Taught

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value
Between Groups	95.65	5	19.13	4.64	.000*
Within Groups	1884.28	457	4.12		
Total	1979.92	462			

Note. *= $p < .001$

After running the ANOVA test the results indicated a significant difference in teacher perception of available resources between the grade levels they taught $F(5, 457) = 4.64$, $p < .001$. When the Tukey Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test was conducted within the groups to determine where the significant difference occurred. The results clearly indicated a significant difference in teacher perception of available resources between the K-2, K-4, and K-6 grade levels and those teachers who taught in the 5-6 grade levels. Teachers in the 5-6 grade levels had a significantly less favorable opinion of the resources available for RtI. Teachers who teach in the 3-4 grade levels had a significantly less favorable opinion of the resources available for RtI than the teachers in the K-6 grade levels. The results indicated teachers in the 5-6 grade levels had the lowest overall perception of the resources available for RtI, with the 3-4 grade levels having the next lowest perception. The overall highest perception of available resource for RtI was in the K-6 grade levels. One of the reasons for these results may be the configuration of the school, which would be different if the building is a 5-6 only building often referred to as a Middle School compared to a K-6 building which is considered an elementary building and perhaps one is more conducive to the RtI model then the other.

Table 6: ANOVA for Fidelity of Implementation and Grade Level Taught

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value
Between Groups	149.66	5	29.93	5.83	.000*
Within Groups	2345.61	457	5.13		
Total	2495.27	462			

Note. *= $p < .001$

An ANOVA test was run for fidelity of Implementation and grade level taught and it indicated a significant difference in teacher perception of fidelity of implementation of RtI based on what grade level they taught $F(5, 457) = 5.83$, $p < .001$. Then the Tukey (HSD) post hoc test was performed to determine where the significant difference was between the groups of grade levels. The results indicated a significant difference existed between K-2, K-4, and K-6 grade levels and the 5-6 grade levels, with the 5-6 grade levels having a less favorable perception of fidelity of implementation of RtI within the building. There was also a significant difference between 3-4 grade levels and K-6 grade levels with the 3-4 grade levels having a less favorable perception of fidelity of implementation of RtI. The highest overall perception of fidelity of implementation of RtI was in the K-6 grade levels with the overall lowest perception was again in the 5-6 grade levels.

Table 7: ANOVA for Professional Development and Grade Level Taught

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value
Between Groups	131.54	5	26.31	5.72	.000*
Within Groups	2102.54	457	4.60		
Total	2234.03	462			

Note. *= $p < .001$

Another ANOVA was run for professional development and grade level taught and it also indicated a significant difference in the perception of professional

development provided for RtI among the different grade levels $F(5, 457) = 5.72$, $p < .001$. The Tukey (HSD) post hoc test was run to determine where the difference was between the groups of grade levels. The results indicated the K-4 and K-6 grade levels were significantly different than the 3-4 grade levels with the 3-4 having a less favorable perception of the professional development provided for RtI. There was also a significant difference indicated between the 5-6 grade levels and the K-6 grade levels with the 5-6 grade levels having a less favorable opinion of the professional development they received. The overall highest perception of professional development provided for RtI was among the K-6 grade levels, while the lowest overall perception was among the 3-4 grade levels.

Respondent's Comments

The final question on the survey provided a place for the teachers to make additional comments or perceptions of RtI in their buildings. As Appendix C indicates there were a total of 65 additional comments written by teachers on the final question. One of the themes indicated teachers' frustration with the lack of time available for RtI. The teacher perceptions ranged from a lack of time to properly implement RtI to perceptions that RtI was just a waste of time and could be more productive in the regular classroom. A total of 10 teachers commented on time as negative piece of RtI. One example of a comment left was, "I sometimes hear teachers complain about RTI, feeling that it is a waste of thirty minutes, that their students have already checked out for the day. (we have RTI at the end of the day)" (Appedix C).

In addition to time teachers commented on professional development and fidelity of implementation in RtI. Nine of the teachers commented the professional development

needed to implement RtI effectively was either never received or was poorly given. One of the respondents stated "I have never been through PD for RTI" (Appendix C).

Another nine teachers made comments about fidelity of implementation, and how their building was not consistently implementing RtI throughout the building. Several of the teachers who commented about professional development also commented about fidelity of implementation, because according to the response since the teachers were never trained properly they were implementing RtI in a way which was convenient to them in their classroom. An example from one of respondent's comments was "Some teachers in our building have been fully trained in RTI. Teachers newer to the district have not received the full training in RTI but instead in Literacy and guided groups. Therefore, RTI is not being implemented as intended consistently throughout the building" (Appendix C).

Teachers also believed there were not enough resources available to implement RtI the way it was supposed to be implemented. A few teachers even made the comment they would find their own resources to meet their students needs in RtI. Another interesting theme noticed throughout the comments was teachers did not feel like RtI was being used to help qualify students for special education, and if it were being used to identify students with learning disabilities then it would make more room in RtI to help other students. However, not all comments were negative, many of the teachers felt like their program was successful in meeting student needs. One respondent even commented she felt like their RtI program worked so well they would make a great model for other schools to follow.

Data Analysis

After reviewing all of the results from the survey and running a one-way MANOVA, a univariant ANOVA, and the post hoc Tukey HSD the researcher determined the results of the three null hypotheses. The first null hypothesis stated: There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the professional development provided. This null hypothesis is rejected because there was a statistically significant difference between teachers' perception of RtI and their perceptions of professional development. The second null hypothesis stated: There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the available resources provided. The second null hypothesis is also rejected because there was a statistically significant difference between those teachers who perceived RtI to be success and those who did not perceive it as success and their perceptions of available resources. As for the third null hypothesis, stated: There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of fidelity of implementation. The third null hypothesis was also rejected due to the statistically significant difference between those teachers who perceived RtI to be success and those who did not perceive it as success and their perceptions of fidelity of implementation.

Summary

The survey results, which were obtained through surveying the Central Ozarks Conference (COC) in Southwestern Missouri were designed to help in understanding teacher perceptions of Response to Intervention (RtI) along with their perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation within the RtI model. After receiving the results they were entered into the SPSS software to analyze data with the intention of testing the three null hypotheses in this study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to give insight into the survey results. After analyzing and presenting the results of teacher perceptions of RtI, professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation it was clear there were significant differences in the teacher perceptions. The additional four demographic questions asked were used to help give a better understanding of where those significant differences may have occurred. An MANOVA, ANOVA and Tukey (HSD) post hoc test was run on for each demographic and dependent variable to illustrate where the significant differences existed. The results clearly indicated there were statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions.

After completing the descriptive and inferential statistics the respondents' comments to the final open-ended question were also presented. All of the 65 comments were recorded and reviewed to help determine possible themes, which may exist, and understand or bring meaning to the statistically significant differences in the statistics. The information received in the open-ended question gave insights into teachers' perceptions of RtI and the different facets needed for RtI to be successful. Chapter Five will provide conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The overall purpose of this dissertation was to determine teacher perception towards RtI, but also to determine teacher perception of professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation within the RtI framework. The findings from this study could be useful to district leaders, administrators, teacher leaders, or classroom teachers who are implementing RtI or currently looking to implement RtI in their school. The study results have already been requested from local school districts in Southwest Missouri who are struggling with implementation factors of RtI. The focus of this study was to test three null hypotheses:

1. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the professional development provided.
2. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of the available resources provided.
3. There is no difference in perception of teachers between those who perceive RtI was successfully implemented compared to those who perceive RtI was not successfully implemented based on their perceptions of fidelity of implementation.

Conclusions

An overview of the survey results along with a review of the sample population and their perceptions will help focus the final conclusions and recommendations. The main overarching question of the survey focused on teacher perceptions of whether or not RtI was successful in meeting student's academic needs. Of the 468 total respondents 417 or 89 percent responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with the success of RtI was in meeting students academic needs. The results do not necessarily give teachers perceptions of whether or not they like RtI, but teachers do feel like RtI is meeting their student needs.

The 13 people or 2.7 percent who strongly disagreed with RtI had a positive outlook on the professional development provided for RtI. The teachers who strongly disagree with the success of RtI also had a positive perception of available resources and fidelity of implementation, which seems to contradict each other. However, when reviewing the comments made in the open-ended questions we might be able to draw some conclusions. First, while the original professional development provided may have been appropriate for the implementation of RtI there was little or no follow up training for RtI. New teachers who join the staff get their professional development by asking other staff members what they need to do. Teachers also had a positive perception of the resources available for RtI, but several teachers commented that they found their own resources or borrowed resources from other teachers. Some teachers commented they did not know what resource or intervention to use for students, while other teachers just simplified their interventions and used a common set of interventions for all students. Fidelity of implementation also received positive perceptions from teachers, but there

were several comments made about fidelity of implementation. Teachers commented that people who did not receive the professional development that was provided often did not implement RtI with fidelity. There were also several comments about the lack of staff available to implement RtI appropriately and effectively.

After reviewing the overall results of the survey and running a MANOVA the researcher also ran an ANOVA tests to try and help get more clarification on the results. There was a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of the available resources in both years of service and grade level taught. Teachers who taught 16-20 years were not as positive about the available resources as teachers who taught 6-10 years. As teachers get more experience in education they are more willing to share their true opinions whether positive or negative. Both sets of teachers 6-10 year and 16-20 overall had a positive perception of available resources. There was also a difference in teacher perceptions of available resource between those teachers who taught in a K-2, K-4, and K-6 building compared to those teachers who taught in a 5-6 building. Teachers in the 5-6 did not agree as much with the available resources as the other grade level configurations. The dynamics and setup of a 5-6 building can be different than the set up of a K-6 building. Often 5-6 buildings are much larger then the other grade configurations, which can results in many different obstacles for schools trying to implement RtI. The resources available would have to be spread out across more teachers, the available staff to help with RtI would be less then the other school configurations, and the varying abilities of students could be significantly different.

Fidelity of implementation also had significant difference when looked at through grade levels taught. Teachers in grades 5-6 did not agree as much with fidelity of

implementation as teachers in grade K-2, K-4, and K-6. Being able to implement a program or a framework like RtI becomes increasingly difficult the larger the staff becomes. Administrators and teacher leaders have to do a good job of providing quality professional development along with follow up professional development, with good communication and visibility to ensure that teachers are implementing RtI or any program with fidelity.

Teacher perceptions of professional development were also compared based on the grade level taught with similar results. The 5-6 teachers did not agree with professional development provide as much as K-6 teachers. However, interesting to note was that the overall lowest agreement was with the 3-4 teachers. All of the different grade levels of teachers agreed the professional development provided for RtI was impactful in the implementation of RtI.

Overall teachers agreed that RtI was successful in meeting students' academic needs. Teachers also agreed that the professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation of RtI were all impactful in the implementation of RtI. However, teachers indicated other areas of concern through the open-ended question that may help buildings in their implementation of RtI. The area most commented on by teachers was lack of time. The comments varied in this section from lack of instructional time to lack of planning time for RtI, one of the respondents even commented that RtI was a waste of time. Professional development and fidelity of implementation were often lumped together in the comments by teachers. Teachers' felt like the professional development was adequate prior to implementation, but there was little to no follow-up professional development provided. As new teachers were hired or if teachers changed

positions they were not trained how to properly implement RtI, which lead to a lack of consistency throughout the building of how RtI was being implemented. Some of the other areas that were commented on were not using RtI to qualify students for special education, lack of help in providing appropriate interventions, focusing on a few and not all of the students. Other areas of concern listed by the respondents were a lack of communication, not using student data, not following an RtI model, or just poor implementation. While not all RtI models are the same the comments left by the respondents and the results of the survey can help with schools understanding and implementation of RtI.

There are several implications for the field of education. The survey has been tested to be valid and reliable and could be used to determine teacher perceptions of RtI, professional development within RtI, the available resources for RtI, and the fidelity of implementation of RtI. Districts or schools could use this information to help guide and direct their next steps when implementing the RtI framework. Individual school results from the survey may also help administrators and teacher leaders understand other areas of concern that could impede the progress of RtI. The survey could lead to important conversations between teacher and the administration. Asking teachers about their perceptions can also have a positive impact on the atmosphere of the building because teachers feel like their opinions are heard and valued. By asking teachers perceptions you also give opportunities for teachers to reflect on what is working and not working, which can lead to growth within the profession.

Limitations

With 1,590 possible teachers in the Central Ozarks Conference and only (*n*=468) respondents the sample size was not as large as anticipated. The researcher limited the study to teacher perceptions of RtI, professional development within RtI, available resources for RtI, and fidelity of implementation of RtI. While there are many factors to implementing RtI, teacher perceptions of what is working and what is not working in RtI can be a valuable resource for schools that could possibly implement RtI. After completing the data analysis of the survey results and reviewing the respondents comments there are many other factors that could be included in future research, including a focus on fifth and sixth grades and RtI, demand on teachers time, and RtI and the impact it has on student achievement.

Recommendations

After reviewing the statistics of this research and the respondents comments there are several possible next steps to continued research on the topic of RtI. The review of literature in the study focused on the review of history in special education, which lead to the implementation of RtI. The next focus was the important components to a successful RtI model and the different models available for RtI. The researcher also reviewed the literature available for effective professional development, and fidelity of implementation. Finally, the researcher reviewed teacher perceptions of RtI, professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation to determine what areas schools could focus their attention for successful implementation of the RtI model. It could be beneficial to study RtI in the fifth and sixth grade especially if the school is set

up in a middle school setting, due to the unique situation of having more students, less available staff, and sometimes different specials scheduling. Another interesting outcome from the research that could use more research would be teachers' lack of time to teach using the RtI model. Teachers often complain about more and more requirements of their time, but with no additional time given in the instructional day. Professional development and fidelity of implementation were also mentioned several times by the respondents, so further research on effective ongoing professional development and the communication and observations required to make sure models like RtI are being implemented with fidelity.

While this research focused on teacher perception, other research could be conducted to look at student achievement data. Two respondents commented that RtI was a waste of time, and that time could be used in other areas. Research could be conducted on the impact of RtI on student achievement. However, this research may be difficult to determine the exact impact of RtI, because students often receive multiple areas of help to improve achievement. Tracking student data is an important piece of the RtI model, so that information could be used in determining the success of RtI.

Summary

Teachers and administrators are always looking for ways to improve student learning and RtI is a model that could be useful in meeting those student-learning needs. Studying Response to Intervention and teachers perceptions of RtI adds to the research available for successful implementation of RtI. As the federal and state adequacy targets continue to raise it is important for schools to find ways to meet students' academic needs. School leaders can use the information obtained from this research to help

overcome some of the obstacles that may hinder the implementation of RtI. Leaders can also use the research to have a better understanding of teacher perceptions about RtI, so they can address those perceptions prior to or during implementation.

Reference

Abbott, M., & Wills, H. (2012). Improving the Upside-Down Response-to-Intervention Triangle With a Systematic, Effective Elementary School Reading Team. *Preventing School Failure*, *56*(1), 37-46. doi:10.1080/1045988X.2011.555793

Barnes, A. C. & Harlacher, J. E. (2008). Clearing the confusion: Response-to-Intervention as a set of principles. *Education and Treatment of Children, 31*(3), 417-431.

Battaglino, L. (2007). Special Education Around the World. *Bridgewater Review,* 26(2), 11-14. Retrieved from http://vc.bridgew.edu/br_rev/vol26/iss2/7

Bean, R., & Lillenstein, J. (2012). Response to Intervention and the Changing Roles of Schoolwide Personnel. *Reading Teacher*, *65*(7), 491-501. doi:10.1002/TRTR.01073

Beecher, C. C. (2010). Response to Intervention: A Socio-cultural Perspective of the Problems and the Possibilites. *Journal of Education, 191*(3), 1-8.

Beglau, M., Craig Hare, J., Foltos, L., Gann, K., James, J., Jobe, H., ... Smith, B. (2011). *Technology, coaching, and community: Power partners for improved professional development in primary and secondary education* [White paper]. Retrieved from ISTE: https://www.iste.org/

Berkeley, S., Bender, W. N., Peaster, L. G., & Saunders, L. (2009). Implementation of Response to intervention: A snapshot of progress. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 42*(1), 85-95.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2008). Reframing organizations (4th ed.). Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com/

Bradley, R., Danielson, L., & Doolittle, J. (2005). Response to intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 38*(6), 485-486.

Brown-Chidsey, R., Bronaugh, L., & McGraw, K. (2009). *RTI in the classroom: Guidelines and recipes for success*. New York: Guilford Press.

Buffum, A. G., Mattos, M., & Weber, C. (2009). *Pyramid response to intervention: RTI, professional learning communities, and how to respond when kids don't learn*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Buffum, A. G., Mattos, M., & Weber, C. (2012). *Simplifying response to intervention: Four essential guiding principles*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Cicek, V. (2012). A Review of RtI (Response to Intervention) Process and How It Is Implemented in Our Public School System. *Sino-US English Teaching*, *9*(1), 846-855.

Crosswalk with previous standards. (2011). Retrieved from http://learningforward.org/docs/pdf/crosswalk.pdf?sfvrsn=0

Devaney, L. (2012, June). Four keys to creating successful elearning programs. *eSchool News*, 15(6), 32.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. [iBooks version]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com/

Dunn, M.W., Cole, C.M., & Estrada, A. (2009). Referral criteria for special education: General education teachers' perspectives in Canada and the united states of america. *Rural Special Education Quarterly 28*(1), 28-37.

Dufour, R. D. (2004). *Whatever it Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn.* Bloomington, In.: Solution Tree.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (2006). Introduction to Response to Intervention: What, Why, and How Valid Is It. *International Reading Association, 41*(1), 93-99.

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., & Compton, D. L. (2012). Smart RTI: A Next-Generation Approach to Multilevel Prevention. *Council for Exceptional Children, 78*(3), 263-279.

Greenwood, C., & Kim, J. (2012). Response to Intervention (RTI) Services: An Ecobehavioral Perspective. *Journal Of Educational & Psychological Consultation*, *22*(1/2), 79-105. doi:10.1080/10474412.2011.649648

Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2009). *The fourth way: The inspiring future for educational change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Hoover, J. J., & Love, E. (2011). Supporting School-Based Response to Intervention: A Practitioner's Model. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *43*(3), 40-48.

Howard, M., & Hoyt, L. (2009). *RTI from all sides: What every teacher needs to know*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

http://www.dese.mo.gov/3tieredmodels/rti/documents/rti-conceptualframeworkofrtiinmissouri.pdf

http://www.rti4success.org/

Hughes, C. A., & Dexter, D. D. (2011). Response to Intervention: A Research-Based Summary. *Theory Into Practice*, *50*(1), 4-11. doi:10.1080/00405841.2011.534909

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. Retrieved from http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-108publ446/html/PLAW-108publ446.htm 8/27/13

Johnson, E., Mellard, D. F., Fuchs, D., & McKnight, M. A. (2006). Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI): How to do it. Lawrence, KS. National Research Center on Learning Disabilities.

Keller-Margulis, M. (2012). Fidelity of implementation framework: A critical need for response to intervention models. *Psychology In The Schools*, *49*(4), 342-352. doi:10.1002/pits.21602

LearningForward. (2012). *Standards into practice: School-based roles. Innovation configuration maps for standards for professional learning*. Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org/

Lenski, S. (2011). What RTI Means for Content Area Teachers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 55*(4), 276-282.

Locke, M. (2012). Back to school: See how veteran teachers sharpen their skills and stay on top of their game [Entire issue]. *Scholastic Administrator*.

Marinak, B. A., & Mazzoni, S. A. (2012). Implementing RTI: A Coaching Perspective On Tier Management. *Reading Today, 29*(6), 14-15.

Marzano, R. J., & Dufour, R. (2011). *In Leaders of learning: How district, school, and classroom leaders improve student achievement.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

McAlenney, A., & McCabe, P. (2012). Introduction to the Role of Curriculum-Based Measurement in Response to Intervention. *Reading Psychology*, *33*(1/2), 1-7. doi:10.1080/02702711.2012.630599

Mellard, D. (2010). Fidelity of Implementation with a Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework: Tools for Schools. National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI).

Mellard, D., McKnight, M., & Jordan, J. (2010). RTI Tier Structures and Instructional Intensity. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice (Blackwell Publishing Limited)*, *25*(4), 217-225. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5826.2010.00319.x

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education http://dese.mo.gov/3tieredmodels/rti/documents/RtIGuidelines08.pdf

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2012, September 12). *Top 10 by 20* . Retrieved from Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: http://dese.mo.gov/top10by20/goals.html

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2013, August). *Section III: Professional Development Committee Budget.* Retrieved from Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: http://dese.mo.gov/divteachqual/leadership/pd_guidelines/documents/ProfessionalLearningGuidelinessection3withcover.pdf

Missouri professional learning communities [Brochure]. (n.d.). Retrieved from Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education: http://www.dese.mo.gov/

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities. (2007). *Core concepts of RTI.* Retrieved August 27, 2013, from www.nrcld.org.

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities. (2007). SLD identification overview: General information and tools to get started. (Brochure). Lawrence, KS: Author

Office of Special Education Programs. (2007). History twenty-five years of progress in Educating children with disabilities through IDEA. Washington, DC: Author

Project Tomorrow. (2013, April). *From Chalkboards to Tablets: The Digital Conversion of the K-12 Classroom.* Retrieved from Tomorrow.org: http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/SU12_DigitalConversion_EducatorsReport.html?gclid=CO_ardLBv7wCFSFo7Aod8D4Apw

Pulliam, J. D. & Van Patten, J.J. (2007). *History of education in america*, 9th Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Educaiton, Inc.

Reeves, D. B. (2010). *Transforming professional development into student results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Required professional development hours. (2012). Retrieved from http://dese.mo.gov/eq/cert/pd- chart.htm

Rebora, A. (2010). *Responding to RTI.* Retrieved from Education Week: www.edweek.org/tsb/articles/2010/04/12/02allington.h03.html

Spear-Swerling, L., & Cheesman, E. (2012). Teachers' knowledge base for implementing response-to-intervention models in reading. *Reading & Writing*, *25*(7), 1691-1723. doi:10.1007/s11145-011-9338-3

Standards for professional learning quick reference guide [Quick Reference Guide]. (n.d.). Retrieved from LearningForward

Standards for professional learning. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://learningforward.org/standards

Sullivan, A. L., & Long, L. (2010). Examining the changing landscape of school psychology practice: A survey of school-based practitioners regarding Response to Intervention. *Psychology In The Schools*, *47*(10), 1059-1070. doi:10.1002/pits.20524

Swanson, E., Solis, M., Ciullo, S., & McKenna, J. W. (2012). Special Education Teachers' Perceptions and Instructional Practices in Response to Intervention Implementation. *Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 35*(2), 115-126.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/%2Croot%2Cdynamic%2CTopicalBrief%2C23%2C

Tomlinson, Carol A., Kay Brimijoin, and Lane Narvaez. *The Differentiated School: Making Revolutionary Changes in Teaching and Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

Walker, A. M. (2012, April 5). Comparing Technology-related teacher Professional Development Designs:A Multilevel Study of Teacher and Student Impacts. *Education Tech Research Development*, pp. 421-444.

Winzer, M. (2006). Confronting Difference: An Excursion through the History of Special Education. *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education.* Retrieved from: http://www.uk.sagepub.com/gargiulo4emedia/study/chapters/handbook/handbook1.2.pdf

www.rtinetwork.org

Zirkel, P. A. (2012). The Legal Dimension of RTI-Confusion Confirmed: A Response to Walker and Daves. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 35*(2), 72-75. doi:10.117/0731948711433092

Appendix A: Consent Letter Sent to Survey Participants

Dear Colleague,

My name is Brenten Byrd and I am the Principal at Harry S Truman Elementary School in Webb City, MO. I am a doctoral student at Southwest Baptist University and I am conducting a research study to gather information about teacher perceptions regarding Response to Intervention (RtI) and fidelity of implementation. I am surveying all elementary school teachers in the Central Ozark Conference in Southwestern Missouri. Since you are a teacher in an elementary school in the Central Ozark Conference, I would like to ask for your participation. I realize that you are very busy; the survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time to complete. The survey is completely anonymous and voluntary. It will ask you for your experience with RtI, perceptions regarding professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

Your privacy is important; your answers will be combined with other participants and reported in aggregate form. Information reported will not indicate individual participants or school districts. There is no penalty should you choose not to participate or answer all of the questions. Your completion and submission of the survey will indicate your consent to participate and permission to use the information that you have provided in my study.

Before you make a final decision about participation, please read the following statements about how your responses will be used and how your rights as a participant will be protected:

- Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any point without penalty.
- You need not answer all of the questions.
- Your answers will be kept confidential. Results will be presented to others in summary form only, without names or other identifying information.
- Your participation will take approximately 15 minutes. During this time you will answer questions about your experience with RtI, perceptions regarding professional development, available resources, and fidelity of implementation.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the RRB Committee at Southwest Baptist University (326-1659). The committee believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subject's privacy, welfare, civil liberties and rights.

You may contact me at 417-437-9822 if you have questions or concerns about your participation. If you would like a copy of the results of this study, you may contact me via email at bbyrd@wcr7.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Brenten Byrd
Principal, Harry S Truman Elementary

Appendix B: Final Survey Instrument

RTI Survey Instrument Thank you for taking this survey! This survey is looking for attitudes and perceptions of Response to Intervention. To assist you in this survey I will define Response to Intervention: Response to Intervention: The practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions.

1.Does your school participate in the Response to Intervention (RtI) process?

1. Yes
2. No

How many years of experience do you have as an educator?

1. 0-5
2. 6-10
3. 11-15
4. 16-20
5. 20+

What is the highest degree that you currently hold?

1. BS
2. MS
3. EdSp
4. EdD/PhD

Which of the following best describes the grade level in which you teach?

1. K-2
2. 3-4
3. 5-6
4. K-4
5. K-6
6. 3-6

Which of the following best describes your classroom?

1. Regular Classroom
2. Specials (Music, PE, Art, Computer, Library)
3. Special Education
4. Title I

2.Response to Intervention is a successful in meeting individual academic needs of students.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

3.Available resources aid in the appropriate monitoring of student progress in Response to Intervention.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

4.Student progress in Response to Intervention is monitored consistently throughout the school.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

5.Professional development received in the area of data collection within the Response to Intervention program was impactful in monitoring student progress.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

6.Response to Intervention is inconsistently implemented throughout the school.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

7. Professional development in the area of Response to Intervention was not helpful in the way instruction for Response to Intervention is delivered.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

8.Resources necessary to the implementation of Response to Intervention are not in place.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

9.Professional development on the Response to Intervention model was explicit in helping understand the time necessary to fully implement Response to Intervention in all tiers.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

10.Classroom resources are available to successfully implement the objectives of Response to Intervention.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

11.Time necessary to successfully implement the Response to Intervention model is given the same importance throughout the building.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

12.Professional development in the area of intervention strategies provided appropriate activities to use with students during RTI.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

13.Resources are available to meet student's needs of extended interventions at all tiers of intervention.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

14.Teachers are consistently using the allotted time for Response to Intervention for the purpose it was meant.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

Please use the following text box to offer any additional responses to your perceptions of the implementation, monitoring and assessment of the Response to Intervention in your building.

Appendix C: Comments from RtI Survey

Please use the following text box to offer any additional responses to your perceptions of the implementation, monitoring and assessment of the Response to Intervention in your building.

Additional technology for the higher groups would be great!

When RTI was implemented 4 years ago, I noticed that the teachers responsible for implementing it, gave groups of students to office aids, the nurse, and other staff members who had no formal training in education. The staff in charge of those student groups were given no resources, just a 30-minute block of time 4 days a week to 'work' with their kids. I seriously doubt that whatever games/activities they came up with were appropriate to meet the needs of those particular students. It was as if the team responsible for implementation just said....hmmmm...who is free at this time? Let's give them a group.....with no instruction at all...Currently, I work with about 100 students over the course of two weeks doing enrichment activities. The students straggle in, most come in late, and since we only have 25 minutes, sometimes they miss a lot of the activity. Specials teachers have RTI duty 4 days a week, and they don't have time to 'prep' for this extra class...and they don't get a stipend for this extra instruction. I think RTI is good in theory, but very poorly implemented. We should get extra pay for teaching this specialized extra class that is in addition to our regular teaching schedule, almost 120 minutes of extra instruction each week, and with that many students (in groups of 26 or 27), it takes a lot of work to prep, and organize the enrichment materials.

I answered the questions as if RtI is actually being used in my school system, as it is designed to, catch those students early and help them before special services are needed and then as the documentation needed to start the special education referral process. However, in our district, that is not how it is being used! We were told years ago when we first started looking at RtI that it would take the place of the Discrepancy model but that has never happened! Too many students are still left to fall between the cracks! When we first started RtI I was so relieved to finally have a model that would help more students. We still do all of RtI except we don't use it to qualify students for special services. I am very disappointed!!!

Sometimes I leave a meeting with great interventions, but no assistance in putting them into effect.

In our district, RtI was supposed to be implemented through out all buildings without PD to helps guide us. Some do it consistently, and some do not. Our building does it consistently and we have learned through the last 4 years what works best for us. A few of our teachers went to PD and trained the rest of our teachers. We have been successful with how RtI is ran in our building the last 3 years. Our administrator has sectioned off a time so that RtI is implemented in our schedule 4 days a week. Fridays are used to go over data during our collaboration times.

Our building implements, monitors and assesses students adequately.

I'm only assuming on some of these responses since I don't teach full time.
We recieve a large amount of lip service but very little 'hands on help' kids are tracked on a 6-8 week period but seldom are there new ideas for a teacher to use with a struggling student. If a child is not going to be placed spec ed I don't feel this a good use of time. It COULD be it is just not in the building I teach in. it could be a wonderful resource.

Our RtI model is directly related to our Literacy Model. We have a process in place to further the intervention through testing for learning disabilities if deemed necessary by our Problem Solving Team.

Our building implemented an intervention block this year for all teachers. Students that receive any intervention are pulled out of our room during that hour and we are not to teach any new content during that hour.

This has been a great way to ensure all students are receiving their needed intervention without missing new material.
RtI is being implemented in my school, however the layers of intervention are very mismatched and there is no collaboration between the layers of intervention and the classroom teacher to provide the student with seamless instruction. Many confusions are being created, because teachers are not on the same page with the same language being used. No data is discussed or looked at collaboratively.

I think our building is a wonderful model for other schools to visit to see RTI in action!

I understand the benefits of RTI but at the same time I miss those minutes with my own students in my classroom. I have less flex time in my daily schedule that could be used used for an extra weekly morning recess for students who have completed all assignments (we have only a 20 minute lunch recess each day) while other students attend study hall to get caught up, a daily chapter book read aloud session, time for the teacher to conference with students who have a D or F on an assignment while other students read independently and RC test, or time for a strategic group of students to receive remediation/practice on a basic skill.

I feel like my building is not doing Rti correctly. I have worked for 2 different school districts that participate in Rti. I was trained on Rti at my previous district and my current district is not doing Rti as it is meant to be implemented. Instead of following the 3 tiers, my building does more of a whole class intervention.

I sometimes hear teachers complain about RTI, feeling that it is a waste of thirty minutes, that their students have already checked out for the day. (we have RTI at the end of the day)

It works !

In theory, RTI will work in the school environment. The challenge we face is being able to implement the best method of RTI.
I think this program is 'beating a dead horse' We should be focusing our attention on the many, not the few. The children that receive the majority of time are already utilizing other programs such as title reading and/or after school tutoring. If we are going to continue to be a competitive nation, we need to be pouring our resources into those who have potential to be leaders.

RTI is successful in our building (HST) due to organization and every teacher working together to utilize the program effectively. It is working!

The 'high flyers' are getting less instruction time from teachers than they received before RtI was implemented. In our school, if a student is doing great in math, they have enrichment choices like p.e. and math. That's great! However, they are not given the opportunity to go further with math during the RtI time slot.

RTI time is vague and confusing. I believe, if implemented consistently, it could have a huge impact on students' progress. In my opinion, it is not given enough time or thought to make an impact.
Our district does not follow through with the RTI model to allow IEPS for students. They are using the discrepancy model, which makes a large part of the RTI ineffective
Response to Intervention time is a great tool to differentiate lessons to better meet student needs. I feel that our building does a great job placing emphasis on this time.
RTI is a work in progress always. This year our team is teaching it differently than we have in the past...and we have found we really see more improvement this year. I think every school / grade has to find what works best for their students (there is not just ONE way to teach RTI.

Kindergarten is being overlooked. Resources have been moved to first grade. It has not always been this way. Originally this wasn't the case. Slowly they have been reallocated.

I find Rti very ineffectual. In theory it sounds great. Practical application has proven otherwise.
I think RTI would be as effective, if not more so, if the resources, strategies, etc reserved for RTI were implemented during small group pullout during the allotted comm arts and math blocks. If RTI worked, students should make gains and move out of tiers 2&3. The fact that we often have the same kids in tier 3 in 6th grade as were in it in 1st tells me RTI isn't as effective as we would like it to be.

n/a
Tiger Time is used as a means of RTI in this building. However, sorting the students must always include sorting for band students. Behavior issues can arise during this time because students are aware that no grades are taken for the work they do and their is limited accountability for students. Band students attend their class 2-3 days a week, making it challenging to give meaningful instruction. Support is provided via push in IAs and instructional resources being provided, but campus data seems to suggest Tiger Time model being used is not effective.

We have found that we were making it too difficult and since we have stepped back and simplified it for the teachers it has been more consistent. Part of that came with picking a few interventions that we use consistently in different ways. The one we use the most often is repeated review and drill. We use it several different ways and that has made the biggest difference. Also realizing that interventions are not programs they are 10 to 15 minutes of a targeted skill, short intervals of time learning a targeted skill has made a big difference in our progress. We also simplified how we are tracking progress and instead of tracking our progress through the district assessments we are tracking the progress of the intervention, fidelity to the intervention. We made the intervention easier to track and we made a data sheet building wide so everyone is keeping data the same way. The last thing we have changed is we are looking at progress differently instead of looking at the big picture and where they need to be by the end of the year we have broken it down in to small intervals which seems much more attainable. The last 3 years have really changed although it not all teachers have seen the changes yet because it takes time to see progress.

I just feel that our intervention time is not used. We are told what to do with the kids but given no resources for the most part. I feel like this last semester was better, but it seems like a waste of time most days. I wish this weren't the case. I also feel that it is typically used like a study hall or reading time for many because we don't want to have to plan for it when we don't know for sure what we're supposed to do.

I feel there needs to be more staff to assist the RTI process. I am a CWC and we need both the gen ed and the sped teacher in the classroom assisting students. It is very difficult for us to provide additional services above what we all ready do for our students.

I think RTI takes away time from other subjects such as science and social studies. Students could receive intervention during these times, as well as math and reading times. It is a shame that science and social studies has been put to the side.

Our school has seen significant student gains, especially in the area of phonics, as a result of implementing an RTI building-wide schedule.
When the idea was first presented to our grade level, some of the teachers were weary of taking on this task, worried that we would not have 'the man power' to implement it the way it needed to be. Luckily, we had a principal that said, 'I want to just to try it and see how it goes and what you need.' Now that we have been doing RTI for a few years, t is wonderful. We see such a huge growth in our students and are able to move students through groups very fluidly. I should probably mention that I teach Kindergarten. Therefore, the assessment process is different than that of other grade levels. We

When the idea was first presented to our grade level, some of the teachers were weary of taking on this task, worried that we would not have 'the man power' to implement it the way it needed to be. Luckily, we had a principal that said, 'I want to just to try it and see how it goes and what you need.' Now that we have been doing RTI for a few years, t is wonderful. We see such a huge growth in our students and are able to move students through groups very fluidly. I should probably mention that I teach Kindergarten. Therefore, the assessment process is different than that of other grade levels. We have 5 elementary buildings in our district and each building appears to be at a different level of implementation. My building has been implementing RTI for several years and it works well.

Time is such an issue!

I work in a small building so there are not enough staff to properly aggregate RTI groups.

I have done a good amount of research as to what RTI is and what RTI is suppose to do. In all honesty, I believe that teachers can do SO MUCH more with small group instruction and centers than they can with RTI. I love the idea of have a small group to work with and help them grow intellectually. However, I do not approve of the idea that you mix up the students across the grade-level and working with students that you never interact with. The homeroom teacher knows the needs of the students the best (if they are doing their job). I believe that RTI resources should be put to better use providing the teacher with in-class assistance with small group instruction.

RTI concept has good intentions. However, with its implementation, more time has not been given for it. Where does it then come from? For us it is shortened time in the classroom when students are focusing on independent practice directly after skills have been taught.

I feel that more adults are needed on all teams to implement RTI successfully. The teams are too small and sometimes schedules conflict when they have to be gone.

The burden of RTI is solely on the classroom teacher. Tier 2/Tier 3 students stay in the classroom. Other support staff do not help.

In response to question 14, our building does not have an allotted time for RtI, and I feel like it is nearly impossible to fit it into our schedules without taking kids out of special classes or recess.
We were not given alloted time for RTI, but rather were told to create time in our schedule. It has been a challenge to find the extra time. Austin Buffem, the author of a RTI book, held a professional development session in our district, but each school and classroom continue to implement differntly. We were told to hold an all school RTI time and seperate students based on their leasrning needs and levels, but this has not been supported in my building. If all stake holders are not on board, RTI is ineffective. With expectation so high for test prep and a new reading program, there is not time to give the bottom 5 students an extra does of what they need.
When training was implemented, it was done by a grade level each year. I taught a grade that had not had pd and changed grades the following year to one that had already completed it. I did not receive the same amount of training as others.

Many of these questions refer to the school as a whole. I cannot speak for others, only myself.

No additional comments.

Most teachers do exactly what they are supposed to do during RtI time. We do have a few who basically use it as a study hall or free reading time.
My district introduced RTI and had a guest speaker. The guest speaker left the staff more confused than they were before. The district has not had any follow through to make sure people are fully implementing RTI; therefore, most staff members are grouping their students by ability but not really

none
We have our RTI during the last 30 minutes of the day. I feel RTI would be more beneficial at different time of the day. I do, however, understand due to scheduling with specials it is not possible to do it at a different time of day.
I have never been through PD for RTI.
I feel that as a classroom teacher, I come up with a lot of my own resources to use. I know that the IA's have resources to help them. The Math RTI is a different situation. We were given a tub for grade level. I usually find my own things to use instead of going through the tub. I love my small group time with my students.
It is often hard to get students caught up on missing work within the classroom when they leave for intervention because they don't normally problem solve enough to be able to understand what they've met without a full lesson on what they missed.
RtI needs to be small group 8 or less; with at least 20 minutes set aside on a regular schedule and with the teacher NOT responsible for monitoring the rest of the class at the same time. If you have 24 6th graders in a classroom and are only working with 6-8 of them the rest will not stay on task!
I feel like our building has good systems in place for RTI.
none
Some teachers in our building have been fully trained in RTI. Teachers newer to the district have not received the full training in RTI but instead in Literacy and guided groups. Therefore, RTI is not being implemented as intended consistently throughout the building.
I was not trained at the same time others were trained. The level of training I received was minimal and I find it to be a bit confusing. Also, the model in which we did a book study relies on all staff and is implemented with only the classroom teacher.
Since RTI is not used in Special Education placement, it is a nonentity. Our district has not brought varied or additional interventionists, it is just window dressing.
More PD and resources are needed. We are told to implement RTI, but are not given enough tools ans support to make it successful unless the teacher is diligent and dedicated to making it work.

I am not closely involved many times until after this process is completed.
We have RTi for grades K-2. Grades 3-4 are strictly classroom interventions, or special education placement. That is a big problem.
I have never had any training other than them showing us the paperwork involved. The response materials puts extra workload on the teacher, does little or nothing for the students except change the standards so that the child has less responsibility for themselves. Generally leaves the teacher out to dry without resources or the help needed.
I believe consistency and continual PD in the delivery model is important in the success of RTI. Consistency and PD seem to be a weak area for us.
HSTruman Elementary school does an excellent job collaborating and working the RTI program for success. The students and teachers enjoy it.
Our building implements RTI but never had any formal training. Each year it is changed and implemented differently. We do not have time set aside just for preparing for RTI. We just do it when we have time. As for data: we do a pretest, biweekly test and post test since an RTI session runs for 4 weeks.

Very little consistency in our building and especially in our district.
While I agree with some view aspecs of RTI, I feel giving classroom teachers classroom time to work on existing curriculum may also bring about the same benefits as RTI.
I teach kindergarten and we have seen huge gains with our students and this is due to 2 things. The new curriculum we are using and RTI. We have a great system.