Curriculum Essentials in RTI:
What Practitioners and School Teams Need to Know

Keynote Session

John J. Hoover, Ph.D.
University of Colorado, Boulder
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Multi-Tiered Instruction in RTI

Tier 1 – Research-based Core curriculum provided to all learners (80%)
Tier 2 – Supplemental instruction provided to struggling learners (15-20%)
Tier 3 – Intensive instruction provided to students with significant educational needs, including learners with disabilities (1-5%)

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Linking Curricular Effectiveness and Assessment

Based on what is taught in the classroom
Linked directly to skills taught and mastered
Conducted on a regular basis
Data-based for making instructional decisions

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Curriculum Effectiveness = RTI Success

*Underlying Premise:*

“Successful school-wide RTI models are grounded in the implementation of the daily curriculum with fidelity”
RTI Curriculum Expertise: Four-Stage Process

Stage 1
Foundations of RTI and Curriculum

Stage 2
Curricular Implications of RTI

Stage 3
Practitioner Curriculum Skill Sets

Stage 4
Continuing Curricular Challenges

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Stage 1: Foundational Factors

- Data-based Decisions
- Instructional Quality
- Dynamic Implementation
- Differentiated Instruction
- Evidence-Based Practice
- Prereferral to RTI Transition

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Foundational Factor - 1

Quality of Instruction VS Intrinsic Disorder

Must confirm proper Tier 1 instruction prior to Tiers 2/3 instruction or determination of a disability
Viewing Struggling Learners

_Lack of progress is viewed from a new perspective in RTI:_

1. In what ways are learners’ struggles related to the curriculum being implemented?

2. How might we adjust the curriculum implementation to improve student progress?

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Foundational Factor - 2

Dynamic rather than static implementation of Curriculum

Simultaneous implementation of several curricular components
Integrated not Fragmented Instruction

Knowledge/expertise in the integrated structure and process associated with multi-tiers of instruction (Tiers 1, 2, 3)

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Foundational Factor - 3

Transitioning from Prereferral to RTI Models

RTI requires change in how we view teaching and learning

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RTI Model</strong></th>
<th><strong>Prereferral Model</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screen all learners</td>
<td>Screening not completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-based practice</td>
<td>May not be evidence-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement discrepancy</td>
<td>Potential discrepancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress monitoring</td>
<td>Infrequent monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBM assessment</td>
<td>Norm reference devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>Wait to Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of instruction</td>
<td>Intrinsic disorders</td>
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Foundational Factor - 4

*Evidence-Based Practice*
Instructional curricula, methods, and differentiated practices validated through research
Evidence-Based Practice: RBC and EBIs

*Research-based curriculum* (RBC):
Comprehensive Curriculum

*Evidence-based interventions* (EBIs):
Structured Interventions

*RBC and EBIs work together to deliver effective curriculum in RTI*
Foundational Factor - 5

Differentiated Instruction
(3 Tiers - 4 Levels)

Tier 1 – General and Targeted
Tier 2 – Supplemental
Tier 3 – Intensive

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Differentiation Types

**General** – Tier 1 curricular differentiations to meet various abilities, styles, background experiences, interests of an entire classroom

**Targeted** - Differentiations in Tier 1 that target specific needs going beyond the General whole class differentiations
Differentiation Types

**Supplemental** – Differentiations to meet Tier 2 supplemental instructional support needs

**Intensive** – Highly focused and specialized differentiations to meet more significant Tier 3 intensive support needs
Differentiations and RTI

Differentiated instruction is essential to providing all students sufficient opportunities to learn in any content area.
Foundational Factor - 6

Data-Based Decisions:
Early screening of progress toward benchmarks

Consistent progress-monitoring of struggling learners

How well does learner RESPOND to the curriculum taught?

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RTI and Curriculum: Big Picture

Your RTI Models and Foundational Factors?

* Confirmation of Quality of Instruction
* Research-Based Curriculum
* Evidence-Based Interventions
* Differentiated Classroom/Instruction
* Sufficient Opportunities to Learn (80%)
* Early Screening/Progress Monitoring Data (Identifying struggling learners)

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Stage 2
Curricular Implications and RTI

Curriculum implementation is a complex process that includes daily multiple decisions, and associated practices delivered as designed, researched and validated (i.e., implementation fidelity)

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Curricular Implications and RTI: Struggling Learners

Low Data Scores – indicate some aspect in the curriculum implementation requires change

Scores do not specifically identify what needs to be adjusted
Integrated Curricular Components

Components of Curriculum

1. Content and Skills (RBC)
2. Evidence Based Interventions (EBI)
3. Instructional Arrangements (Student Groups)
4. Classroom/Instructional Management
5. Evaluation of the learner’s academic progress

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Curricular Components and Instructional Adjustments

Adjusting the wrong curriculum component may lead to continued lack of progress

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Avoiding Unnecessary Adjustments

Examples of Misguided Curricular Adjustments . . .

Example 1: Adjusting the evidence-based intervention rather than the instructional arrangement (large group to paired learning)

Example 2: Simplifying curriculum content when all that is needed is a more appropriate evidence-based intervention

Example 3: Adjusting classroom management procedures rather than modifying the content component by adjusting the curriculum access point

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Creating Effective Instruction

**Curricular implications within RTI:**

1. Validated curriculum
2. Adjust proper curriculum component
3. Proficient use of evidence-based practice
4. Confirm instructional fidelity
5. Integrate instruction with progress monitoring

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Viewing Struggling Learners

*Overarching curriculum implication:*

How we think about the *interaction* between curriculum implementation and progress of struggling learners

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Stage 3
Practitioner Skill Sets

Practitioner Competencies
and
RTI Curriculum Expertise

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Practitioner Competency #1

Prevention/Early Intervention rather than Determination of Eligibility

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## Curriculum Implementation and Screening/Monitoring Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RTI data scores identify:</th>
<th>RTI scores do not identify:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Academic proficiency level</td>
<td>* Intrinsic disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Rate of progress</td>
<td>* Implementation Fidelity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Extent student falls below an expected score</td>
<td>* Specific instructional aspects working/not working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Need to adjust instruction</td>
<td>* Specific area of the curriculum requiring adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Need for additional support to classroom teacher</td>
<td></td>
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Key Points in the RTI Curriculum-Assessment Process

The interaction between curriculum and assessment (CBM) in an RTI Model

How to best interpret scores to make instructional adjustments

Significance of considering multiple factors in addition to data scores

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Practitioner Competency #2

Curriculum implementation represents transition from aspects within prereferral to RTI ways of thinking (prevention vs wait to fail)
Transitioning from Prereferral to RTI: 10 Suggested Curricular Practices

1. *Strengthen* Tier 1 and Tier 2 curriculum implementation.
2. Conduct *ongoing monitoring* of student progress.
3. Chart progress data to *illustrate* learner growth.
4. Implement *timely* curricular adjustments.
Transitioning from Prereferral to RTI Model . . .


6. Use *only* research-based curricula and evidence-based interventions.

7. *Collaborate* with other educators on a regular and supportive basis.
Transitioning from Prereferral to RTI Model . . .

8. *Focus* on the five curricular components when making instructional decisions.

9. Properly implement the curricula (i.e., with *fidelity*).

10. *Long-term goal* of RTI is to determine the most effective instruction for learners not identify student deficits.

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Practitioner Competency #3

Develop ‘decision rules’ to guide use of data scores to make curricular adjustments
Curricular Decision Rules Using Data Scores

*Cut Score* - Minimum proficiency level score below which learner is considered at-risk or struggling (e.g., 25%)

*Rate of Progress* - Rate at which learner should progress to maintain acceptable progress

*Gap/Discrepancy Analysis* - Difference between expected and actual proficiency levels/Progress Rate
RTI and Discrepancy Analysis

**Discrepancy 1:** Intellectual Capacity-Actual Achievement (*Limited use in RTI models*)

**Discrepancy 2:** Expected-Actual Achievement (*Essential in RTI models*)

**Discrepancy 3:** Dual: Rate of Progress and Proficiency (*Preferred discrepancy in RTI models*)
RTI Decision Rule Items...

1. Cut scores
2. Significance gap
3. Standard for making decisions
4. Process to confirm Tier 1 instructional fidelity
5. Point at which a special education referral or evaluation is made
Barriers to Effective Curriculum Decision-Making Process

Clarify Expectations and Practices . . .

Length of time for Tier 2 intervention (e.g., 10, 12, 15 weeks?)
Number of Tier 2 intervention trials (2, 3, 4 rounds?)
Cut scores and how to interpret rate of progress
Continued focus on deficits rather than on effectiveness
Lack of clearly defined practitioner roles in RTI

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Practitioner Competency #4

Practitioners must confirm that *implementation fidelity* exists to ensure that appropriate instruction occurs.
Instructional Fidelity Expertise

Fidelity Requires:

1) **Selection/use** of valid and reliable curricula and interventions
2) **Implementation** of curriculum according to the validated procedures
3) **Process** confirming proper implementation of the curriculum

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Confirming Instructional Fidelity

**Direct:** Observations; Co-Teaching; Coaching
**Indirect:** Self-Reporting; Interviews

*Type of information gathered*
Use of RBC and EBIs
Adherence to all required steps in the curriculum
Appropriately differentiated curriculum
Effective use of classroom/instructional management

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Effects of Lack of Fidelity?

If curriculum implementation lacks fidelity
then
Progress scores are questionable
leading to
Unnecessary/inappropriate adjustments
often contributing to
Mistakenly believing that lack of progress is indicative of a disability

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Practitioner Competency #5

*Direct link* between RTI data scores and special education decision-making

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RTI and Special Education

Persistent lack of progress may lead to a formal referral to special education

(Klingner & Edwards, 2006)
RTI and Special Education Assessment: CEC Position (2007)

“RTI data do not provide sufficient data to rule out or identify a disability”

“RTI curricular monitoring results contribute to the comprehensive evaluation in the identification of a disability”

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Practitioner Competency #6

*Culturally Responsive*
RTI Curriculum

*Meeting all diverse needs*

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Proper implementation of curriculum within RTI is essential for practitioners to clarify difference from disability
RTI Curriculum and Diversity

*Meeting cultural/linguistic diverse needs...*

1. Functional Language Usage
2. Contextualized Learning
3. Joint Productivity
4. Instructional Conversation
5. Challenging Curriculum

Source: CREDE

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Valuing the Significance of Diversity

One Size Doesn’t Fit All

Respect the value of differences in the teaching and learning environment
Practitioner Competency #7

Practitioners require **defined roles**

to best provide

RTI team member **expertise**
(e.g., diversity, literacy, social-emotional, etc.)

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Educator Roles in Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring Process

Skill Set 1: **Collaborative** efforts and support (district administration, principal, general/special educators, psychologist, interventionist, other support personnel)

Skill Set 2: **Clearly defined** problem-solving team decision making process (i.e., decision making guidelines/rules)

Skill Set 3: **Articulated** team member roles (General/Special Educators, Principal, Interventionist, etc.)

Skill Set 4: **Representation** of all necessary areas of expertise (e.g., assessment specialist; bilingual educator, etc.)
Know your Curriculum!!!

Possess working knowledge of:

- Purposes
- Validity
- Processes

associated with implementing curriculum within RTI models

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Practitioner Competency #8

Adjusting to Change

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Capacity for Change

*Developing change capacity includes several qualities:*

1. Change happens to individuals
2. Change is a process; NOT a single event
3. Educators in different roles perceive change differently
4. A variety of factors influence change
5. Change capacity can be developed

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Process of Change

Steps to follow to create effective curriculum change:

Step 1: Awareness
Step 2: Interest
Step 3: Time
Step 4: Limited Implementation
Step 5: Full Implementation
Change and RTI Foundations, Implications and Competencies

**Foundational Factors** - Evaluate your teaching and learning environment to determine inclusion of each of the six foundational factors

**Curricular Implications** – Evaluate your five curriculum implementation components and adjust accordingly

**Practitioner Competencies** – Self-evaluate own proficiency with each of the eight competencies
Stage 4
Continuing Challenges

*Future Challenges in RTI and Curriculum*

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Looking Forward

Expertise in:

* Foundational Factors
* Differentiated Curricular Implications
* Practitioner Competencies

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Core RTI Curricular Practices . . .

Four core practices in daily instruction:

(1) Use of research-based curriculum and evidence-based interventions

(2) Implementation with fidelity

(3) Select/use of general, targeted, supplemental and intensive curricular differentiations

(4) Use universal screening and progress monitoring to document levels of proficiency AND rate of progress

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Personal Development Plan

Suggested Areas for Continued Professional Growth:

- Instruction-assessment connection
- Purposes of curriculum being delivered
- Procedures for proper implementation
- Process for confirming implementation fidelity
- Methods to accurately chart/interpret results
- Procedures to apply data scores in valid ways
- Strategies to increase own capacity to adjust to change
- Overall: Expertise in the multi-tier process for delivering curriculum to all learners

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Effective RTI Curriculum Implementation:

- Emphasizes prevention/early intervention for struggling learners
- Links assessment data to instructional adjustments
- Transitions from prereferral ways of thinking about teaching and learning
- Empowers practitioners by focusing on quality of instruction rather than intrinsic disorders

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Contact Information

John J. Hoover, Ph.D.
University of Colorado, Boulder
303-735-2015

john.hoover@colorado.edu