

**VALLEY STREAM UFSD THIRTEEN
VALLEY STREAM, NEW YORK**



RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)

**District Plan
2021-2022**

Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen

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Plan: Response to Intervention

Year(s) Plan
is Effective: 2021-2022

RtI Plan – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen

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Introduction

Response to Intervention (RtI) is primarily a general education initiative designed to address the needs of struggling learners early in their educational experience. (1) The language related to RtI was included in U.S. education law with the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). (6) It was included due to the national trends which indicated the disproportionate representation of minorities and English-language learners (ELLs) among those identified as learning disabled. (7)

RtI begins with high quality research-based instruction in the general education setting provided by the general education teacher. Curriculum is aligned to the NY State Common Core Learning Standards and grade level performance indicators. (1.5) In an RtI process, a student who is struggling receives additional instructional support provided by matching instruction to a student's individual needs through a multi-tier instructional model. Each tier provides instruction with increased intensity such as smaller groups or instructional time focused on specific areas. (2) The focus is on targeted interventions directed to the need of the individual student rather than broad based instruction. RtI aims to identify and address at-risk students so those students may become independent readers. National research in early intervention suggests that many struggling early readers can be caught up to grade level and that currently too many of these students are simply classified with learning disabilities. (3) Differentiated learning activities (e.g., mixed instructional grouping, use of learning centers, peer tutoring) are utilized to address individual needs. (2.5)

Student intervention outcomes drive instructional decision making at every tier of the model. A systematic, data-based decision making (problem solving) method is used to decide not only what interventions to try but whether the implemented strategies are working for the student. (3) RtI systems combine universal screening, progress monitoring, and high quality instruction for all students with interventions targeted at struggling students. (4)

The four essential components of RtI are:

- A school wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing academic failure
- Universal Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Data-based decision making for instruction, movement within the multi-level system, and disability identification (in accordance with state law). (5)

I. Appropriate Instruction

A school district's process to determine if a student responds to scientific, research-based instruction shall include appropriate instruction delivered to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel. Appropriate instruction in reading means scientific research-based reading programs that include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies. {8 NYCRR sec. 100.2 (ii) (1) (i)}

Appropriate instruction is defined in the "Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State Districts – October 2010" as a core program that provides:

- High quality, research-based instruction to all students in the general education class provided by qualified teachers;
- Differentiated instruction to meet the wide range of student needs;
- Curriculum that is aligned to the NYS Common Core Learning Standards and performance indicators for all general education subjects; and
- Instructional strategies that utilize a formative assessment process.

For high quality early literacy instruction, the core reading program should minimally be scheduled for an uninterrupted 60 minute block of instruction daily. (1)

The language in NCLB is more specific with regard to reading requirements than any prior education legislation. The language of NCLB was shaped around the 2000 National Reading Panel Report (NRP, 2000); the language states that scientifically based reading instruction should include instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, including the teaching of early literacy skills.

No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 both require use of scientifically based curricula and interventions. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that students are exposed to curriculum and teaching that has demonstrated effectiveness for the type of student and the setting. Research-based, scientifically validated interventions/instruction provides our best opportunity to implement strategies that will be effective for a large majority of students.

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen uses a balanced literacy program that embraces all of the key areas noted in both NCLB and IDEA 2004. In addition, the district has been training teachers in various instructional methods that incorporate differentiated instruction to meet the needs of the variety of learners in the district. Information on the learning needs of English Language Learners (ELL) is part of this ongoing discussion and training. The district has used departmental meetings, grade level meetings, faculty meetings, professional development time as well as superintendent conference days to support the implementation of the plan.

Appropriate instruction for Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners (LEP/ELL) students must be both culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate. This includes research-based instruction that has been validated with LEP/ELL students and bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, at levels pursuant to Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. (2)

Instructional methods based on scientific research identify those practices that demonstrate high learning rates and improved academic performance for most students. Scientifically-based research:

- Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation
- Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions
- Relies on measurements or observational methods that provide multiple measurements and observations
- Has been accepted by the peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparatively rigorous, objective and scientific review. {No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001} (3)

1. (The University of the State of New York, 2010 – Response to Intervention Guidance)
2. (The University of the State of New York, 2010 – Response to Intervention Guidance)
3. (The University of the State of New York, 2010 – Response to Intervention Guidance)

II. Screening Applied to All Students

Universal Screening

Screening is conducted to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening tests are typically brief, conducted with all students at a grade level, and followed by additional testing and short-term progress monitoring to corroborate students' risk status.

In screening, attention should focus on fidelity of implementation and selection of evidence based tools, with consideration for cultural and linguistic responsiveness and recognition of student strengths.

Assessments

Curriculum Based Measures are used for Universal Screening in Dibels because they help to hone in on the essential elements of reading in the five pillars (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Informal assessments such as running records are also used and offer additional information to inform decision making.

Protocols

Universal Benchmarks follow a set schedule (as determined by Administrative Council), and there are protocols in place to ensure proper administration of assessments and inter-rater reliability. At the start of each benchmark screening period, interventionists with experience administering the assessments with fidelity will observe classroom teachers and one another to ensure inter-rater reliability, and will provide feedback as needed.

- Teachers coordinate assessment schedule
- One teacher observes the other administering the assessment
- Observing teacher notes fidelity of administration and scoring of assessment
- Observing teacher gives feedback

These measures will be repeated for each new assessment that is added throughout the year.

Analyzing Data

After each benchmark period (fall, winter and spring), Data Inquiry Teams at each building will convene. The teams are comprised of the building principal, interventionists (which may include reading teachers, speech/language teachers, special education teachers, ESL teachers, and other support staff as appropriate) who will meet with classroom teachers to discuss the students' performance on the screening (benchmark assessment). Although teams will consider benchmarks and cut points, they will also consider other factors, including the results of informal assessments such as running records, along

with any other information teachers provide. The teams will determine which students are not meeting benchmarks, and will then decide what type of monitoring and intervention that a student needs, as part of a hybrid approach to assessment and intervention.

Data Inquiry Teams will analyze the data at least three times a year at the end of the benchmark assessment periods, but may meet more often if the need arises. The use of informal assessments during the course of instruction can provide teachers with additional information on which to base instructional decisions. These informal assessments include Early Literacy Profile (ELP) and Running Records benchmarks. A combination of the Dibels and informal, ongoing assessments (checklists, reading inventories, running records) completed by teachers to monitor progress are recommended so that use of Dibels is not the sole index of progress, which could lead to unintended consequences such as children being fast and accurate in word reading, but inattentive to the meaning of what is read.

Grade level literacy grids are completed by each classroom teacher (refer to attached charts in appendix V).

III. Instruction Matched to Student Need

Multi-Tier Service Delivery Model

Tier I Instruction:

Description of Core Instruction:

Core instruction takes place in the general education classrooms and includes all students. Instruction is aligned with the NYS Common Core Learning Standards. It includes research-based instruction that meets the needs of 80% of the learners, many of whom benefit from differentiated instruction and independent projects. The components are phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The core instruction includes differentiation based on the abilities and needs of all students. A universal screening (Dibels) using research-validated assessments is given to all students three times a year (fall, winter, and spring) and is also aligned to the grade level curriculum, which is based on the NYS Common Core Learning Standards. (Refer to Appendix A for listing of specific strategies and inventories.)

We have put in place a number of research-based practices within the core instructional program which include leveled classroom libraries that allow for choice and reading volume; a classroom instructional balance of large and differentiated, small group instruction; and the utilization of assessment data in all of the five areas above to drive instruction and provide additional support in the mainstream classroom. Classroom teachers utilize and/or develop research-based strategies that target students' deficiencies through supplemental intervention in the general education classroom. These are more intensive interventions than classroom instruction, either having smaller group size or additional time outside of classroom literacy times.

The foundation of core instruction for LEP/ELL students should be culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate at levels pursuant to Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Tier 2: Students Receive Core Instruction Plus Targeted Intervention

Tier 2 is a secondary intervention intended for 10 -15% of students who are not responding to core instruction at Tier 1. This supplemental instruction is provided **in addition to**, and not in place of, the core instruction provided in Tier 1. Tier 2 interventions focus on areas of student need or weakness that are determined from the results of the Universal Screening (Dibels) in combination with the uniform grade level district literacy assessments. The data teams additionally review Benchmark Assessments which may include:

- Superkids/Wonders Unit Tests
- DRA (K-2)
- Dibels (K-4)
- QRI (3-6)

Tier 2 Interventionists may include:

- Classroom Teachers
- Special Education Teachers who provide RtI support
- Reading Teachers
- ESL Teachers
- Speech/Language Teachers
- Math Specialists
- Other highly qualified interventionists

The location of a Tier 2 intervention may be the classroom or an alternate location to be determined by the school. Group size is approximately 5 – 7 students. Frequency of intervention provided varies; however, it is no less than three times per week for a minimum of 20 – 30 minutes per session. The duration of the intervention may last anywhere from 6 – 12 weeks. Tier 2 interventions are supported by research and vary by curriculum focus, group size, frequency, and duration. Individual student's needs affect the determination of these variables.

Some students who receive a Tier 2 intervention will be monitored using Dibels Progress Monitoring probes and some will be strategically monitored depending on the students' levels. Once it is determined that a Tier 2 intervention is required, the student will receive direct, systematic, research based instruction. (Refer to Appendix A for specific recommendations. One or more of the following research-based interventions may be chosen as a course of action.)

Tier 3: Core Instruction plus Customized Intervention

Tier 3 provides tertiary intervention intended for about 1 – 5% of students who are not responding to instruction at Tiers 1 and 2. The third tier of this model creates intensive instructional interventions to increase an individual student's rate of progress. This tier provides greater individualized instruction in an individualized or small group session. These services are considered supplemental instruction to Tier 1 and are not intended to replace Tier 1 instruction. Individual diagnostic assessments are conducted to determine specific patterns of skills that the individual has and does not have for the purpose of designing effective instruction to remediate the students' deficits. Some or all of the following assessments may be used to design such instruction.

- Superkids/Wonders Unit Tests
- Dibels (K-4)
- DRA (K-2)
- QRI 4
- NWEA

Tier 3 interventionists may include:

- Special Education Teacher
- Reading Teacher
- ESL Teacher

The location of a Tier 3 intervention is usually outside of the classroom. Group size is approximately 2 – 3 students. Frequency of intervention provided varies, but it is more frequent than Tier 2 interventions and for a time period of thirty minutes. The duration of the intervention may last anywhere from 8 – 16 weeks. Students who receive a Tier 3 intervention will be monitored for progress using weekly Progress Monitoring probes. Students in Kindergarten and First grade will also receive bi-weekly progress monitoring. Once it is determined that a Tier 3 intervention is required, one or more of the following research-based interventions may be chosen as a course of action:

- Pull Out Reading Services
- Wilson Reading program
- Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program
- Reading Wonder Works Intervention
- Reading Wonders for English Learners

In accordance with section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, when a student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students and begins receiving a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention parents must be notified in writing. Parents are informed of increasing levels of instructional supplemental services including progress monitoring data, strategies used to increase students' rate of learning and right to refer for special education.

IV. Repeated Assessments of Student Achievement

Purpose and Use of Progress Monitoring:

The National Center on Response to Intervention refers to progress monitoring as repeated measurement of academic performance to inform instruction of individual student progress in general and special education in grades K-8. It is conducted at least monthly to (a) estimate rates of improvement, (b) identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress and/or (c) compare the efficacy of different forms of instruction to design more effective, individualized instruction.

Strategic Monitoring vs. Progress Monitoring

Some students may need once monthly strategic monitoring (Tier 1 and some Tier 2 students-to be done by the classroom teacher for students who are performing only slightly below average, as determined by Dibels and running record data), and some students may need weekly or bi-weekly progress monitoring (Some Tier 2 students & all Tier 3 students to be done by the interventionists for students who are performing well below average on Dibels assessments and running records). Data Inquiry Teams will decide which type of monitoring is appropriate based on data from benchmark assessments and teachers' observations.

Dibels Strategic Monitoring

Strategic monitoring is the responsibility of the classroom teacher when Tier 2 interventions are provided. The probes that are given are in the specific areas decided at the Data Inquiry Review meetings. These probes are administered once a month for children who score within the yellow range of the Program Recommendations Report.

Dibels Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is usually the responsibility of the interventionist responsible for providing the intervention. Probes are administered weekly. The probes that are given are in the specific areas decided at the Data Inquiry meetings. Students who are progress monitored are typically students whose scores fall within the red range of the Program Recommendations Report.

Steps for Progress Monitoring Using Dibels

- Check the student's baseline score on the benchmark assessment (universal screening).
- Determine the intervention and the interventionist.
- Enter weekly progress monitoring scores.
- Check the students' progress toward goal or lack thereof.
- If student is progressing on target, continue current intervention until the next benchmark assessment.
- If student is not progressing on target, reconvene team (classroom teacher and interventionist(s) to discuss data and to consider modifying intervention.

Data Review

Dibels includes procedures for setting goals and monitoring rate of improvement (refer to attached chart). The data teams will analyze the comprehensive data and determine if the slope or percentage of mastery shows responsiveness to the intervention. Dibels recommends a certain amount of data points to make reliable decisions about student progress. Four data points either consistently above or below

the target line may prompt a meeting of the interventionist(s) and the classroom teacher to change intensity or frequency of intervention. If the data shows that the student has achieved the targeted goal, he/she may move from Tier 2 to Tier 1. Conversely, if a student is not progressing toward goals, the Data Inquiry Team may decide that a Tier 3 intervention is necessary.

- Team meetings can be conducted every six to eight weeks to review data, change intervention, and examine student growth.
- Generally we wait six data points before any change in intervention.

Steps for Monitoring Progress Using Running Records

- Record student's independent reading level based on benchmark assessment data.
- Plot level on graph (refer to attached graph in Section V).
- Establish goal for end of monitoring period using established literacy benchmarks as guide, along with other information about the student.
- Determine frequency of progress monitoring based on student's starting level and goal.
- Plot the results of each running record. Note any relevant information about the student's strengths and weaknesses decoding, comprehension (literal and inferential), fluency, and reading rate.
- If student is progressing on target, continue current intervention until the next benchmark assessment.
- If student is not progressing on target, reconvene team (classroom teacher and interventionist(s))to discuss data and to consider modifying intervention.

Use of Universal Screening Data and Progress Monitoring by Tier

Tier 1

Data from universal screening assessments and progress monitoring will inform students' movement among tiers. The data can be plotted on graphs and used in Tier 1 to decide if students are progressing, and it may confirm or refute the results of the screening level assessment. The data can also inform decisions about core curriculum instruction.

Tier 2 and 3

In Tier 2 and Tier 3, strategic monitoring and progress monitoring are used to determine whether or not the intervention is helping students to progress adequately toward grade level expectations. Analysis of progress will take into account a student's learning rate as compared to prior levels of performance, peer growth rate, and expected performance based on criterion-or-norm-referenced measures. Graphs are used to display data for analysis and decision making.

V. Application of Student Information to Make Educational Decisions

Decision Making-Models

When Data Inquiry Teams and Rtl Teams meet to discuss students and their progress, they will use a hybrid decision making model. Although certain situations lend themselves more to one type of protocol than the other, we will avail ourselves of both in order to meet diverse students' needs.

Standard Protocol Model

A standard protocol model will typically be used when addressing the needs of students who struggle at the word level. In most cases, the intervention for these students will be Leveled Literacy Intervention or Wilson Reading program. These are primarily scripted intervention protocols that are applied in a standardized way. In the event that these standard protocols are unsuccessful, or if the student is not integrating decoding strategies into real-world reading, a problem-solving model will then be employed.

Problem-Solving Model

A problem-solving protocol will typically be used when addressing the needs of students who struggle in the area(s) of vocabulary development, fluency, and/or comprehension. Using this protocol, teams will identify the key learning issues, decide what types of targeted instruction and interventions are needed, and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention(s) over time by examining data from progress monitoring and informal assessments.

Decision-Making Model Combined

The hybrid approach will include using multiple assessments to determine instruction and interventions. These may include, but are not limited to Dibels, Teachers College (TCRWP) Early Literacy Profile, DRA (K-2) and Running Records (including longitudinal running record charts for Tier 2 and 3 learners), QRI (3-6) and observational data.

Time-Frames

Duration and intensity of interventions will be based upon student performance data, not a specified period of time. Effective data-based decision making includes regular review of data as appropriate to the intervention being monitored, sufficient number of data points, analysis of trend or trajectory toward grade level achievement (i.e., Is student closing gap?), visual representation of trend (i.e. graph), and a discussion about intervention fidelity (program fidelity where applicable).

Criteria for Decision Making

- If fewer than 80 percent of all students are meeting benchmarks on the universal screening assessment – then a review of the fidelity to the core curriculum or the core curriculum itself may be conducted (Tier 1).
- Decision rules for students who are receiving Tier 2/Tier 3 interventions:
When progress monitoring data remain below the target (goal) line, and when six or more data points are flat, decreasing or inconsistent, school staff should reconvene a team meeting. The team will utilize the data to consider whether an intervention needs to be changed.
When progress monitoring data meet or exceed the target (goal) line for a period determined by the team, usually six or more data points, the team will consider whether the student no longer requires intervention.

VI. Considerations when Implementing RtI with Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners

English Language Learners (ELLs)

The New York State Education Department cites considerations when implementing RtI with English Language Learners:

- Teaching is culturally responsive – The student’s prior experiences are considered. These include home language background and socio-cultural background.
- Reading Instruction – Teachers should consider the relationship between a student’s language proficiency and his/her literacy skills. Reading fluency and comprehension may be strongly determined by vocabulary and linguistic proficiency of both the first and second languages.
- Math Instruction – Linguistic proficiency and vocabulary comprehension are important when understanding math concepts. Several concepts of math are necessarily universal.
- When designing the school district’s RtI process, literacy and oracy in both native and second languages, culture, and educational history are variables to be considered when assessing and planning instruction for ELLs. In all three tiers, these variables stay consistent.
- ESL is an integral part of core instruction for all LEP/ELL students. (Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education)

Matching Instruction to Student Need

Differentiated instruction should be used for ALL students. However, differentiated instruction for ELLs should consider the student’s level of English proficiency and prior educational experiences to address cultural and linguistic differences.

When determining appropriate instruction/intervention, the following list applies to **all levels** of ELL students:

- Consider the amount and type of ESL instruction the student received in the past and in the present.
- If applicable, consider the amount and type of native language instruction in the past and in the present.
- Ensure that the language(s) used for intervention matches the language(s) used for core instruction.
- Consider the impact of language and culture on instruction and learning.
- Contact the family for guidance and feedback.
- Ensure that certified ESL teachers serve on the instructional decision-making (RtI) team.

Tiers – ESL methodology is employed at all three tiers to help rule out limited English proficiency or lack of appropriate instruction as causes for learning disabilities. Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services may be provided by the ESL teacher and/or by classroom teacher/interventionists.

Tier 1 – The core instruction guidelines for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of ELLs are:

1. **If possible**, analyze assessment/screening data to determine performance levels in both L1 (primary language) and L2 (secondary language). Dibels will be used for universal and progress monitoring along with the Rigby assessments.
2. Use these assessments to plan instruction.
3. Differentiate this instruction based on: academic performance levels, the student’s LI and L2 levels, and the cultural background of the student.

Tiers 2 & 3 – Identical to native speakers of English, ELL students who continue to struggle with the academic material will need further intervention. The problem-solving team should:

1. Review and analyze the data collected in Tier 1 documentation and conduct further assessments as needed, and make recommendations for Tier 2 intervention(s). Include amount and type of native language instruction, if applicable.
2. Select the instructional areas that need more intense intervention.
3. Determine the extent of ESL instruction needed during Tiers 2 and 3 interventions to ensure the student will benefit from the interventions.

Progress Monitoring

When monitoring the progress of ELL students:

1. On-going assessments should be conducted in the language(s) of instruction.
2. When evaluating instructional programs, the results of instruction should be compared to results for “true peers” (students with the same native language and culture and similar educational histories) when setting benchmarks, monitoring progress and deciding whether a LEP/ESL student is responding adequately to instruction or requires a more intensive intervention.
3. If possible, the comparative sampling of true peers should be large enough for making educationally valid decisions.
4. Knowledge of typical second language development and the student’s history of first and second language use should be considered when setting benchmarks and interpreting progress.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) Versus Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

At times, teachers may refer students for evaluation of learning and behavior problems because they do not believe that limited English proficiency is the issue. A student may be observed using English on a regular basis and the conclusion is made that language transition is no longer a factor. However, it is important to discriminate between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in the second language. These acronyms are part of a language proficiency theory developed by Jim Cummins (1984) that explains the differences between social and academic languages, respectively. BICS is the basic language ability necessary for face-to-face social communication. It includes gestures, visual clues, and expressions, and it relies on situational context. It takes one to two years to achieve age-appropriate levels in BICS. CALP is the language ability necessary for academic achievement in a context-reduced environment such as classroom lectures and textbook reading. It takes five to seven years to achieve age-appropriate levels of CALP – with minimal assistance provided.

The following research-based table indicates the length of time it takes to acquire various proficiency levels for non-English speaking students receiving one hour of assistance in English instruction each day in a public school. It includes descriptions of what the student is able to do with language within the classroom context at various levels of acquisition.

(Collier, 2011. pp. 33-34)

VII. Parent Information and Notification

Parents are exposed to the concept of Response to Intervention through district informational parent meetings and letters. This information should provide a rationale for RtI and the procedures put in place to address the state and national regulations. The following information should be provided to parents:

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen incorporates a **Response to Intervention** (RtI) model at the K-6 level in the area of Reading. VS UFSD Thirteen's model provides interventions at the *universal, targeted, and intensive* levels, with standard intervention protocols for each level of intervention.

1. **Universal level:** These are research based interventions used with all students at a particular age or grade level in the classrooms.
2. **Targeted level:** These are research based (supplemental) interventions used with students whose progress places them at some risk for not meeting instructional goal.
3. **Intensive level:** These are research based interventions used with students whose progress places them at high risk for not meeting instructional goals and may require more individualized instructional approaches.

Within the RtI model, Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen collects **progress monitoring data** on a schedule that:

- Allows comparison of your child's progress to the performance of peers.
- Is appropriate to your child's age and grade placement.
- Is appropriate to the content monitored and
- Allows for interpretation of the effectiveness of the intervention.

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen uses a balanced literacy program. At each grade level, a significant amount of time is allotted to reading to reading instruction for all students. For students identified as needing supplemental instruction, each school offers a range of interventions through **general education**. Students are grouped according to ability and need and groups range in size from two to six students. The district monitors reading progress of all K-6 students three times a year. For students needing supplemental instruction, data is collected in a smaller period of time, such as, weekly or monthly.

The school will tell you whether your child begins to make sufficient progress or if your child **continues to have difficulty**. If you and the school have tried several interventions and progress is still limited, you may want to consent to an evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine what you child's educational needs are and to consider whether he or she may have a learning disability.

Parents are essential to a child's success in school. When a child needs supplemental instruction, school staff will describe that instruction to you. School staff may also ask you to tell them anything that you think may affect your child's learning (i.e. frequent absences, trauma, problems with friends, etc.) and work with you to design an effective intervention for your child. Parents are encouraged to partner with the school to provide extra practice to develop skills.

A parent may request an evaluation for special education at any time, including during any stage of the RtI process. To request an evaluation, contact the principal, a special education teacher or the psychologist at the school.

Procedures for Notification to Parents

A school district's process to determine if a student responds to scientific, research-based instruction shall include written notification to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about:

- (a) The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided pursuant to the structure and components of the RtI program selected by the school district;
- (b) Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
- (c) The parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

[8NYCRR 100.2(ii)(1)(vi)]

The RtI process includes specific parent notification requirements. Parents must be notified in writing and in a language or mode of communication they understand if their child needs an intervention beyond that which is provided to all students in a classroom.

Parents receive written notification when beginning/ending intervention services as they move from tier to tier. This notification is sent by the principal. This letter includes:

- Reasons (amount and nature of data)
- Area of instruction
- Frequency and intensity of services

The letter should clearly explain the universal screening monitoring device.

- Dibels K-4
- DRA (K-2)/running records; Teachers College benchmarks for 3-6; and the QRI (3-6)
- Dial for Kindergarten

Additional services provided will be based on the results of the universal screening.

The district will establish clear procedures for communicating progress monitoring data three times a year, which may include:

- AIS Report Card
- DRA (K-2)/Running Records Benchmarks
- Dibels Benchmark parent reports

Parents should be notified of their right to request an evaluation for special education services at any time. In the event a student is referred for an evaluation to determine if the student has a learning disability, the parent will have received appropriate data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. [8NYCRR 200.4(j)(1)(ii)(b)]

Informational Letter to be used when students move from tier to tier, sent from Principal

[SCHOOL LETTERHEAD]

Dear _____,

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen believes in providing the highest quality of education for every student. To meet this goal, we have adopted a three-tiered approach to instruction. This process is a national initiative known as Response to Intervention, or RtI.

Students needing supplemental instruction/intervention will be monitored frequently to ensure students meet grade level expectations. Students will continue to participate in the core curriculum even if they need the support of tier two or tier three interventions.

- In tier one, teachers will use different strategies within the core curriculum to address student needs.
- Students who are not progressing at a rate that allows them to meet end of year benchmarks in tier one will be provided interventions matched to their needs. These tier two interventions take place in a small group for approximately 60 -90 minutes per plan weekly or monthly. Interventions occur for a minimum of six weeks, but may continue as needed to help students succeed in the core program. The instructional support team may make adjustments in the intervention plan based on the student's progress. Depending on student need and progress, the team may change the intervention or increase the frequency, time, or intensity of the intervention.
- This more intense level is considered tier three. Students provided with tier three interventions are placed in smaller groups than in tier two. Monitoring of student's progress continues on a weekly basis.

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen recognizes that all students learn differently. We are committed to helping all students succeed. Therefore, we ask for your support in implementing this three-tiered approach to meet the academic and behavior needs of your child along with all of the students in our school. As a parent/guardian, you have the right to request an evaluation for special education services at any time.

We look forward to sharing additional information as we progress through the school year. For additional information on RtI, please visit the New York State Parent Information link, at <http://www.nysrti.org/page/for-parents/> for more information about RtI.

Principal

RtI Tier 2 Notification Letter

[SCHOOL LETTERHEAD]

Dear Parent or Guardian of _____,

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen believes in providing the highest quality of education for every student. To meet this goal, we have adopted a three-tiered approach to instruction. This process is a national initiative known as Response to Intervention, or RtI.

Students needing supplemental instruction/intervention will be monitored frequently to ensure students meet grade level expectations. Students will continue to participate in the core curriculum even if they need the support of tier two or tier three interventions.

Your child is receiving tier one instruction in the classroom. This instruction includes different strategies within the core curriculum to address your child's needs. In order to monitor your child's progress, teachers have been collecting and analyzing data through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. The data indicate that there is a need for additional, more individualized, support. Our goal is to help your child progress at a rate that allows him/her to meet end of year benchmarks. Your child will now be provided with tier two intervention services in the area of _____ starting on _____.

These tier two interventions will take place in a small group for _____ minutes a week and will be provided by _____. An instructional support team will monitor your child's progress _____ (weekly/monthly). These interventions will occur for a minimum of six weeks, but may continue as needed to help your child succeed in the core program.

The instructional support team may make adjustments to the intervention plan based on your child's progress. You will be notified if the team finds that the intensity of intervention services has to be changed. As a parent/guardian, you have the right to request an evaluation for special education services at any time.

You will be kept informed throughout the year of your child's progress. Intervention services will be discontinued once your child meets the criteria (e.g. satisfactory performance on classroom and state assessments) for exiting the service(s). If you have any questions, please contact the instructional support team teacher(s) or call me. We will be happy to answer any question regarding these programs.

Principal

Please return this section to the classroom teacher.

Child's Name _____

I understand that my child will be receiving Tier 2 intervention services.

Parent /Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

RtI Tier 3 Notification Letter

[SCHOOL LETTERHEAD]

Dear Parent or Guardian of _____,

Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen believes in providing the highest quality of education for every student. To meet this goal, we have adopted a three-tiered approach to instruction. This process is a national initiative known as Response to Intervention, or RtI.

Students needing supplemental instruction/intervention will be monitored frequently to ensure students meet grade level expectations. Students will continue to participate in the core curriculum even if they need the support of tier two or tier three interventions.

Your child has been receiving tier two intervention services for the last _____ weeks. These interventions included more individualized instruction to address your child's need. In order to monitor your child's progress, teachers have been collecting and analyzing data through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. The data indicate that there is a need for additional support. Our goal is to help your child progress at a rate that allows him/her to meet end of year benchmarks. Your child will now be provided with tier three intervention services in the area of _____ starting on _____.

These tier three interventions will take place in a smaller group for _____ minutes a week and will be provided by _____. An instructional support team will monitor your child's progress weekly. These interventions will occur for a minimum of six weeks, but may continue as needed to help your child succeed in the core program.

The instructional support team may make adjustments to the intervention plan based on your child's progress. You will be notified if the team finds that the intensity of intervention services has to be changed. As a parent/guardian, you have the right to request an evaluation for special education services at any time.

You will be kept informed throughout the year of your child's progress. Intervention services will be discontinued once your child meets the criteria (e.g. satisfactory performance on classroom and state assessments) for exiting the service(s). If you have any questions, please contact the instructional support team teacher(s) or call me. We will be happy to answer any question regarding these programs.

Principal

Please return this section to the classroom teacher.

Child's Name _____

I understand that my child will be receiving Tier 3 intervention services.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

VIII. The RtI Process in Determining a Learning Disability

This information is from the New York State “Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts” (October 2010) and the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act: (IDEAm 2004).

According to Federal Law, A Specific Learning Disability is defined as follows:

- (i) General. The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

The data obtained through RtI can help document that the reason for a student’s poor performance in meeting reading benchmarks is not due to a lack of appropriate instruction or limited English proficiency. RtI can give important descriptive information about a child that can accompany data obtained from an individual evaluation, such as how a child learns, and why they are having difficulties reaching standardized benchmarks.

Comprehensive and multidisciplinary evaluations include a social history, psychological evaluation and observation, physical evaluation, and any other appropriate evaluations (educational, speech and language, occupational or physical therapy). This information taken together with Student Center Data and information on instructional strategies used throughout the RtI process provide important information to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) about the student’s progress in meeting State approved grade level standards and benchmarks. When determining if a student has a learning disability, a number of exclusionary factors must also be taken into account, such that a learning disability is not the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. This data should include but is not limited to:

- Data that demonstrate that a student was provided appropriate instruction delivered by qualified personnel, including research based instruction in reading.
- Progress monitoring data that describe how a student responded to particular interventions of increasing intensity.
- Instructional information on a student’s skill level and rate of learning relative to grade level standards on norm/criterion referenced benchmarks; and
- Evaluative data including Curriculum Based Measures (CBM) regarding a student’s performance that is useful and instructionally relevant.

Data from multiple sources must indicate that when a student receives appropriate instruction, he/she:

- Does not adequately achieve grade level standards and benchmarks in the area of reading
and
- a) is not making sufficient progress in meeting these benchmarks when provided with appropriate instruction that is consistent with an RtI Model;
or
- b) exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance and/or achievement relative to age or grade level standards as found relevant by CSE;
and
- has learning difficulties that are not primarily the result of a visual, hearing or motor disability; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage or limited English proficiency.

The following document specifies the criteria that must be considered as part of the RtI process when a learning disability is suspected. This document was taken from the New York State “Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State School Districts” (October 2010) document.

DOMUMENTATION OF THE DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR A STUDENT SUSPECTED OF HAVING A LEARNING DISABILTIY

Section 200.4(j)(5) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education requires that the committee on Special Education (CSE) prepare a written report of the determination of eligibility of a student suspected of having a learning disability that contains a statement of the following information:

1. The CSE has reviewed the individual evaluation results for _____, which indicate that the student:
 - has a learning disability requiring special education services.
 - does not have a learning disability.
2. This decision was based on the following sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the student’s physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior in accordance with section 200.4(c)(1) of the Regulations:
3. The relevant behavior noted during the observation of the student and the relationship of that behavior to the student’s academic functioning indicate:
4. The educationally relevant medial findings, if any, indicate:
5. To ensure that underachievement in a student suspected of having a learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or mathematics, the CSE must, as part of the evaluation procedures pursuant to section 200.4(b) and (c) consider:

- data that demonstrate that prior to, or as part of, the referral process, the student was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel.
- and
- data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the student's parents.
6. The CSE has determined, consistent with section 200.4(j)(3) of the Regulations, that:
- the student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics, calculations, mathematics problem solving:
- and
- the student either does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified in this paragraph when using a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention pursuant to section 100.2(ii);
- or
- exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age. State-approved grade level standards or intellectual development that is determined by the CSE to be relevant to the identification of a learning disability, using appropriate assessments consistent with section 200.4(b).
- and
- the student's learning difficulties are not primarily the result of a visual, hearing or motor disability, mental retardation; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency.
7. Complete this item if the student has participated in a process that assesses the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention.
- The following instructional strategies were used and student-centered data was collected:
- and
- Document how parents were notified about the amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided; strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and the parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

8. CSE Member Certification of the Determination of a Learning Disability:

The determination of eligibility for special education for a student suspected of having a learning disability must be made by the CSE, which must include the student’s regular education teacher and a person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of students (such as a school psychologist, teacher of speech and language disabilities, speech/language pathologist or reading teacher). Each CSE member must certify in writing whether the report reflects his or her conclusion. If not, the member must submit a separate statement presenting his or her conclusions.

Title	Signature	Agree	Disagree
District Representative	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent of Student	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular Education Teacher	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Education Teacher	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Psychologist	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent Member	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others: Specify	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date: _____

IX. Ensuring Staff Knowledge and Skills Necessary to Implement RtI Programs

A school district shall take appropriate steps to ensure that staff has the knowledge and skills necessary to implement a Response to Intervention program and that such program is implemented consistent with the specific structure and components of the RtI process selected by the school district.

(8 NYCRR100.2 (ii)(3))

Fidelity of Implementation:

Fidelity addresses not only the steps involved in an intervention, but also the integrity of the screening and progress monitoring procedures as well. In order to ensure high levels of fidelity, the district will make sure that staff receives appropriate and sustained professional development relative to assessment procedures and interventions. These professional development activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Job embedded and on-going training as part of the district's overall Professional Development Plan.
- Professional development provided by staff that are knowledgeable in the areas of early literacy, data-based decision making and progress monitoring:
 - District staff development hours
 - Professional conferences
 - Turnkey trainers

Fidelity of the process at the school level means consistency with which the various components are implemented across classrooms and grade levels. Fidelity of Implementation will be monitored by building level IST teams and building administrators in the following areas:

- Intervention/instruction is delivered in the way which it was designed to be delivered.
- Screening and progress monitoring procedures which may include Dibels, Superkings/Wonders Unit tests, TCWRP running records and benchmark, and NWEA are administered in a standardized manner, and an explicit decision-making model is followed.
- Instruction and intervention are implemented consistent with research or evidence-based practice.
- Staff receives professional development; and
- Administrators provide supervision and serve as instructional leaders.

The district RtI Committee will develop strategies for evaluation of implementation and effectiveness of the model from initial steps forward. These evaluations should describe progress over the year and allow for adjustment to the RtI process if necessary.

Administrative staff will serve as instruction leaders and ensure that individuals within the building and/or district have a whole-picture understanding of the model, know what data can be collected to evaluate systematic implementation, and have the skill to understand and analyze data.

APPENDIX A

Research Bases and Description of Research-Based Practices

Vocabulary

Research base for teaching vocabulary:

Source: Research-Based Methods of Reading Instruction K-3, by Sharon Vaughn and Sylvia Linan-Thompson

Ways to teach vocabulary:

- Teach words and their meanings systematically
- Provide opportunities to use the vocabulary
- Make word knowledge an ongoing part of the day
- Have students read and listen to texts

Types of vocabulary instruction:

- Explicit-teachers and students give definitions and descriptions
- Indirect-students read and are exposed to different types of texts
- Multimedia-students use other types of media to help them to understand words

Source: The Struggling Reader, by J. David Cooper, David JI. Chard, and Nancy D. Kiger

Citing several research studies, including that of the National Reading Panel, the authors assert that: Students learn oral and print vocabulary in a variety of ways. Therefore, no one approach will work for all students or even for any individual student.” (p.78)

Research-based guidelines for teaching key concept vocabulary (5 steps):

1. Select 6-8 words related to the key concepts in the text
2. Make sure the words are going to be useful in reading texts
3. Know the context in which the words appear (meanings can vary)
4. Provide interactive instruction that builds connections for students (connect new words to other words and concepts that the students already know in the context of sentences, paragraphs, or longer texts).
5. Use graphic representations during instruction (word maps: Venn Diagrams).

Fluency

Research base for teaching fluency:

Source: The Fluent Reader, by Timothy V. Rasinski

“...the report of the National Reading Panel (2000) indicated that fluency should be a key component of effective instruction.” (p.26)

4 Ways to Build Reading Fluency:

1. Model Good Oral Reading
2. Provide Oral Support for Reading (Choral Reading, Paired Reading)
3. Offer plenty of practice opportunities (Repeated Readings, Read Naturally)
4. Encourage fluency through phrasing

Format for Read Aloud Work:

1. Practice
2. Setting the stage
3. Thinking aloud
4. Responding after reading aloud (oral response, visual response, written response, physical response)

Supported reading:

- Choral reading (types: refrain, line-child, dialogue, antiphonal reading, call and response, cumulative choral reading, choral singing, impromptu choral reading)
- Paired reading (teacher and child, parent and child, two children together)
- Recorded reading
- Echo reading
- Buddy reading

Source: Research-Based Methods of Reading Instructions K-3, by Sharon Vaughn and Sylvia Linan-Thompson

- During fluency activities, students should read independent-level texts when working alone or with peers, and they should read instructional-level with adults. Frustration-level texts are not effective choices for fluency development.
- “First through 3rd graders should spend approximately 20 minutes each day on fluency-related activities (p. 52).”

Ways to improve fluency:

- Read with a model reader, such as a teacher, an older student, or another adult.
- Choral
- Echo read
- Use books on tape
- Read scripts or do Readers' Theater
- Do partner reading
- An explicit model of fluent reading is the key, along with opportunities to do repeated readings of a text

Source: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*, by Richard Allington

Fluency-Oriented Whole Class Reading Instruction

Allington described the following research project conducted in second grade classrooms for "Fluency-Oriented Whole Class Reading Instructions." It led to substantial reading gains. The three major components were:

- Redesign reading lessons to emphasize repeated readings and partner readings to improve fluency. Fluency is emphasized, but lessons are also comprehension oriented because a focus on comprehension seems to enhance fluency and vice versa.
- The teacher discusses the story using a story map framework after first reading the story aloud to the students.
- Next, the story was echo read in a whole or small group setting.
- After that, the students read with partners and did "pair sharing."
- The students read once more with a performance type of activity (for example, students reading different parts or roles).
- Students reread the story to an adult at home once or twice during the week.
- Students engaged in silent reading with self-selected texts, including rereading as one option, for 15-30 minutes a day.

Source: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*, by Richard Allington

Shared Book Experience

Allington cites rigorous research studies showing that Shared Book Experiences produced "statistically superior impacts" on measures of (second grade) readers' fluency, accuracy, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension when compared to "round robin" reading. The procedure is:

- Show the students the cover of the book (preferably a Big Book), and discuss title, cover art, etc. Ask students to make predictions.
- Read the text aloud dramatically.
- Lead a discussion about the story, including a retelling.

- Reread the text several times.
- During rereading, highlight additional aspects of the book, such as rhyme, language patterns, syllables, etc.
- Teachers must pay attention to the students' responses in the discussion and then adapt the lessons as needed.

Source: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*, by Richard Allington
Readers' Theater

Teachers either use commercially prepared scripts or short scripts they develop themselves from the books or story the students are reading. Allington believes that the scripts teachers write themselves are preferable, especially if students are involved in the selection and preparation of the scripts, because it involves more engagement with the text.

Once the scripts are written, the procedure is:

1. Give students time to read through the script several times.
2. Do a choral reading of the script.
3. Have students read different parts and practices the script.
4. Have students perform for an audience.

Eventually, students can work individually or in teams to develop other scripts from texts that interest them.

Source: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*, by Richard Allington

Rigorously designed research studies have demonstrated that:

- Fluency can be developed, most readily through a variety of techniques that involve rereading texts
- Fostering fluency has reliable positive impacts on comprehension performance.

Comprehension

Research Base for Teaching Comprehension

- A.** Increase the volume of texts that struggling readers read with accuracy, fluency and comprehension.

Interventions

*Reading logs

*Reading goals

*Independent reading, shared reading, partnership reading, reading clubs, guided reading, book clubs

- *Morrow*, 1992 demonstrated the casual relationship between reading volume and achievement. Guthrie, 1999 reading volume predicted comprehension in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10, even when prior knowledge, past reading achievement, and motivation were statistically controlled. Research identified failures of Title I programs and special education programs to precipitate reading growth due to the actual reduction of volume of reading in remedial and resource room activities which focused on other activities besides actual reading. Allington & McGill-Franze, 1989; Haynes & Jenkins, 1986; O’Sullivan et. Al., 1990 Vaughan, Moody, & Schumm, 1998; Puma et. Al., 1997.

- B. Capitalize on the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing.**

Interventions

*Volume in writing

*Writing for reading

*Different genres in writing

*Use published authors as mentors

- C. Match texts to readers. Fluency, decoding and comprehension success breeds increased success. Avoid frustrating reading experiences (fiction/nonfiction leveled libraries requisite).**

Use comprehensive alphabetic leveling system established by Fountas and Pinnell. Word length, sentence length, word frequency formulas for leveling (Frye, Lexile) leave out key elements of background knowledge, inherent challenges of genre, setting/plot/content-area vocabulary, support from illustrations, text features, predictability of content and context, etc. These are less desirable criteria for strugglers.

D. Struggling readers must collaborate, bring books home, and have rich choices that are readily accessible.

Guthrie & Humenick, 2004- meta-analysis of 22 experimental or quasi-experimental studies of reading motivation and achievement; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; One-size-fits-all-instruction for all of a reading program makes teaching harder and less effective (Ivey, 2000; Schraw, Flowerday, & Reisletter, 1998).

E. Reading talk is comprehension.

All reading comprehension is founded in language development, which at its core “originate(s) as actual relationships between individuals” (Lev Vygotsky, 1978, p. 957 Mind and Society Harvard University Press in Calkins & Tolan, 2010)

Research base for teaching comprehension:

Research summary of comprehension proficiencies:

- Many struggling readers can decode but do not understand what they read. Others have decoding difficulties and comprehension, difficulties.
- Providing struggling readers with active, expert comprehension instruction improves their understanding.
- Most reading interventions are not focused on comprehension strategy teaching.
- Expertise is needed to offer effective strategy lessons.

(R. Allington, What Really Matters for Struggling Readers. P. 137)

Source: What’s after Assessment?: Follow-up Instruction for Phonics, Fluency, and Comprehension by Kathleen Strickland

Before reading:

- Surveying and predicting
- Activating prior knowledge
- Setting a purpose for reading
- KWL
- Anticipation guides
- Guided imagery/Role playing
- Multi-media Support Texts and Multi-Sensory Artifacts (Jackdaws)
- Creating a scenario
- Pretelling/Sequencing (Benson and Cummins, 2000)
- Inferential Strategy

During reading:

- Imagery (visualization)
- Predicting (inferring)
- Self-Questioning (metacognition)
- Context clues, rereading, and skipping
- Adjusting reading rate (monitoring)
- Paraphrasing, summarizing
- Asking for help
- Reciprocal teaching
- Guided reading
- Literature circles or book clubs
- Choosing books and forming groups
- Introducing books
- How much to read and when to read
- Structure of discussion groups
- Teaching students how to discuss (post-it notes, role sheets, quotes and questions, prompts, bookmarks with strategies or places to record thinking, other forms of response)
- Assessing and evaluating literature circles
- Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA)
- Think-aloud
- Shared reading
- Conducting a shared reading session
- Language experience stories
- Pair-Think-Share

After reading:

- Summarizing, retelling
- Connecting
- Story mapping
- Someone-Wants-But-So
- Linguistic Roulette
- Response journals
- Story frames
- Semantic webbing of characters in a story
- Visual timeline or flowchart about a story or topic
- Venn diagrams
- Say something (prompts or none)
- Cloze procedures
- Interpretive questions
- Write and Share
- Compare and contrast charts or other designated Thinking Maps

Source: *What Really Matters in Response to Intervention.* Richard Allington

- Meaning-emphasis reading instruction (researchers believe it is better than skills-emphasis reading framework)
- “Maximize the opportunity to read”
 - Focused on meaning and means of constructing meaning
 - Provided students with opportunities to discuss what was read
 - Integrated reading and writing with other subject areas
 - Research-based features of instruction that are critical to comprehension development
 - A great deal of time spent reading
 - Experience reading real texts for real reasons
 - Experience reading a range of text genres that we want students to be able to comprehend
 - A setting rich in vocabulary development through reading, experience, and discussions of words and their meanings
 - A setting rich in high-quality talk about texts that have been read
 - Lots of time spent writing texts for others to read

Research-based common traits of exceptional comprehension teachers:

- Understand use of strategies while reading
- Incorporate comprehension instruction into daily, weekly, and monthly lessons
- Have students apply strategies in a wide variety of texts
- Vary size of strategy instructional groups
- Use large groups to introduce a new strategy, old strategy with a new genre, and use think-aloud lessons to show how to use the strategy
- Use small groups for more intensive instruction for students who need it, to offer more challenging work for some, and to discuss books
- Have one-to-one conferences to assess understanding and application of a strategy and for intensive strategy lessons
- Gradually give students more responsibility for applying strategies
- Have students demonstrate use of strategies in a variety of ways (writing genres, graphic organizers, etc.)
- “Understand why they teach strategies and how they teach strategy lessons.”

Research-based “Useful strategies for Struggling Readers’ Intervention Lessons”:

- **Summarizing** – use different types of texts
- **Story grammar/graphic organizers:** use to identify important themes in a text
- **Question generating/Answering** (by students)
- **Prior knowledge/prediction:** show how to activate background knowledge before reading and show how to make predictions
- **Imagery (visualization):** show how to make mental images of settings, characters, etc.

The author cites another study, of Title I outcomes, and notes that the study “found that remedial reading specialists who placed a greater emphasis on comprehension and higher-order thinking skills were those who produced higher student academic achievement.” (p. 126)

“We have good evidence that there are many struggling readers with adequately developed decoding skills who still cannot read with understanding.” (p. 129)

Source: *Research-Based Methods of Reading Instruction K-3*, by Sharon Vaughn and Sylvia Linan-Thompson

Some intervention practices that facilitate reading comprehension are:

- Providing guided practice
- Encouraging cooperative learning
- Using graphic and semantic organizers
- Offering extended feedback for students’ responses
- Providing opportunities for students to ask and answer questions
- Summarizing
- Teaching how to use multiple strategies to understand text

Before reading:

- Set a purpose
- Ask questions
- Make connections
- Pre-teach vocabulary and concepts
- Link background knowledge to the text
- Relate text to students’ lives
- Teach text features and how to use them

During and after reading:

- Do think-aloud work to show how to monitor comprehension while reading
- Ask questions
- Draw inferences
- Summarize
- Check predictions

Source: *What Really Matters in Response to Intervention*: Richard Allington

Research base for matching texts to reader’s levels:

“High levels of reading accuracy produce the best reading growth.”

“When struggling readers read routinely from texts that they could read at the historical ‘independent’ reading level (98 to 99 percent accuracy) they made the greatest reading gains.”

Instructional Support Team (IST) Process

Step 1 = Initial request for assistance form completed by teacher making request.

Step 2 = Principal assigns case manager based on information from referral

Step 3 = Case manager meets with teacher and completes the case manager form

Step 4 = Case manager form is given to the psychologist who sets up IST meeting

Step 5 = IST meeting with psychologist completing the IST meeting form after reviewing request for assistance form, case manager form and discussing concerns. Data is part of the meeting, including classroom assessments, NWEA assessments and any other assessments available.

Step 6 = IST next steps are reviewed with parties involved (e.g., parents, principal, other service providers). Next steps are implemented, which could be interventions, progress monitoring, additional meetings to review progress, or CSE referral.