

Funding Considerations for Implementing Response to Intervention (RtI) in Pennsylvania

Response to Intervention (RtI) is an early intervening strategy designed to identify and address the academic and behavioral needs of students before they fail. Instructional interventions are provided based on the level and intensity of the identified need(s). In addition, RtI is an alternative option to the discrepancy model for the identification of students with specific learning

disabilities. The goal of RtI is to improve student achievement using research-based interventions. Funding for RtI is available from a variety of existing sources. This resource provides a short description of these potential funding sources and the RtI components/activities that may be funded through each source.

Possible Funding Sources

PA-Pact: provides resources for schools and districts to invest in proven practices that will ensure that all students achieve greater academic success. Through PA-Pact, school districts create a single application for up to three separate funding sources:

- **Accountability Block Grant (ABG)**—Provides districts with financial assistance to implement effective educational practices and initiatives to improve student achievement.
- **Educational Assistance Program (EAP)**—a special tutoring program targeted to the most academically challenged school districts.
- **Accountability to Commonwealth Taxpayers (ACT)**—a school district's increase above the annual inflation index of the Basic Education Funding under Section 2502.49.

Title I Part A: Title I services can be considered one of the tiers within the RtI model. There are two kinds of Title I Part A programs: Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance. Both programs can support the RtI model, but there are slight differences in the way each might contribute. Both programs are eligible to be provided in elementary and secondary schools. The district identifies the schools within the district that are Title I eligible and which ones receive those funds.

- **Schoolwide**—In schools operating a schoolwide program, the entire school can receive benefits from Title I funds and the operations of the school are based on its schoolwide plan. All students are considered Title I students and all teachers are considered Title I teachers. RtI must be part of the school's schoolwide plan. The school is not required to specifically identify a student, as Title I, but the intents and purposes of Title I must still be met. Students must be taught to the same challenging content standards required for all children. Aides must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.
- **Targeted Assistance**—In a school operating a targeted assistance Title I Part A program, Title I funds may only be used to provide assistance to identified Title I students. Staff paid with Title I funds can only work with well-identified students. Aides must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher. Title I services could be considered as part of one or two of the tiers in the RtI model and all Title I program requirements must be met. Students must

be taught to the same challenging content standards required for all children.

- **General considerations**—Title I funds must supplement, not supplant, local and state funds. Comparability must be maintained across schools within the district.

Title I Part B (Reading First): These funds can be used to support professional development activities to ensure the effective delivery of scientifically based reading research, core programs, coaches, intervention materials, and assessments.

Title II Part A: These funds are for professional development and can be used for all teachers and paraprofessionals in the district. Professional development for scientifically-based research instructional classroom strategies, specific academic interventions, and behavior interventions could be provided to all staff.

Title II Part D: These funds support the use of technology, software, hardware, and professional development for technology use and integration. Assessment, progress monitoring, and data analysis might be supported with these funds.

Title III: These supplemental funds support the delivery of language instruction educational programs to students who have a primary language other than English. This program is designed to improve the education of limited English proficient (LEP) children and youths and also provides enhanced instructional opportunities for immigrant children and youths. Title III funds could be used to support LEP students receiving assessment and instructional interventions in the RtI framework, and for professional development for those interventions.

Title IV: These funds support Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities and could be used to support schoolwide efforts to promote appropriate Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP): Districts that meet the eligibility requirements can combine applicable funds (Titles II A, IID, IV and V) to support allowable activities under Title I A, IIA, IID, III, IVA&B, and VA.

IDEA—Part B (Special Education): Districts may spend up to 15 percent of their Part B funds for implementing early intervening services (EIS) in their elementary and secondary schools. These funds may be used to enable teachers and other school staff to deliver scientifically-based academic and behavioral interventions including literacy instruction, adaptive and instructional software, and behavioral evaluations services and supports.

RtI Funding Considerations in Pennsylvania: Summary

RtI Components/Activities	ABG	EAP	ACT	Title I Part A	Title I Part B Reading First	Title II Part A	Title II Part D	Title III	Title IV Part B	REAP	IDEA
Foundational Standards aligned core instruction	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Universal Screening	Yes				Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Data based decision-making											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Monitoring • Formative Assessment • Diagnostic Assessment 	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Tiered Intervention and Service Delivery											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-Based Intervention • Flexible grouping • Fidelity of implementation 	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental Engagement	Yes			Yes	Yes						Yes
Professional Development	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Behavior interventions						Yes			Yes		Yes