



# FOCUS on Results

Guidance & Technical Assistance for Special Education Stakeholders

August 2006



Accountability

Assessment

Curriculum & Instruction

Dispute Resolution

Early Childhood

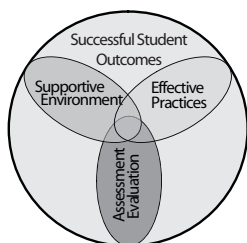
IEPs & IFSPs

Personnel

State & Federal Policy

Transitions

Other



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

This **FOCUS on Results** document offers three different examples of how Response to Intervention (RtI) is improving outcomes for students in Michigan.

**Key Ideas:**

- Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) school-wide multi-tiered system for RtI
- Kalamazoo Public Schools RtI initiative
- Huron Intermediate School District RtI initiative

## MiBLSi Outlines A Multi-level System of Support for Michigan Students

by Steve Goodman

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a school-wide, multi-tiered system of support getting recent attention since it was endorsed and authorized within the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA 2004). In the document *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation* [National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), 2005], NASDSE describes RtI as the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student need. Student progress is frequently monitored to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals and apply child response data to important educational decisions. A school-wide support model provides the foundations for RtI, using prevention and intervention strategies for identified academic and/or behavioral problems. This *FOCUS on Results* article provides a brief description of Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi)—a Michigan multi-level system of support model that incorporates RtI practices.

### What Is MiBLSi?

MiBLSi is a Mandated Activities Project (MAP) under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The project, sponsored by the Michigan

Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, works to develop support systems and sustained implementation of data-driven, problem-solving models in schools to help students become better readers with the social skills necessary for success. Currently, there are more than 100 schools throughout Michigan participating in MiBLSi, with each implementing a school-wide, multi-tiered model of support. MiBLSi is coordinated through the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency (KRESA), the Macomb Intermediate School District (ISD), and the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (ISD).

The MiBLSi model utilizes a systems approach to address the reading and behavior needs of students within a school. Staff commitment is crucial to the successful implementation of the model. To develop commitment, staffs are encouraged to answer two questions:

1. Are you satisfied with the reading and/or behavior performance of your students?
2. If you are not satisfied with student performance, do you expect student performance to change if you continue in the same manner?

**Visit  
www.cenmi.org!**

- **To read** news of interest to special education stakeholders.
- **To learn** more about upcoming workshops, events, and services important to all who have a stake in the education of individuals with individualized education programs (IEPs).
- **To browse** the site for links and glossary terms.
- **To download** documents and publications.
- **To order** publications, including the *Revised Administrative Rules for Special Education*, *Complaint Procedures for Special Education*, and the *IEP Manual* and forms.
- **To subscribe** to *Leading Change* and *FOCUS on Results*.



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

If staffs answer “no” to these questions, they may be ready for a change in the way schools provide students support within the school.

The MiBLSi model encourages the creation of building leadership teams to guide school-wide support efforts. The building leadership team evaluates the level of support currently in place and then makes plans to enhance or develop current support systems. When faced with ever increasing demands, it is important for the school-based leadership team to identify where the most school-wide support is needed and allocate resources for those activities, with emphasis on the most important and urgent needs. It is critical during the process of implementation of school-wide support that staff views these efforts as a modification or improvement in the ways that schools support students. Schools are cautioned not to use the school-wide support methodology to “add on” to situations where demands are many and resources are limited. Multiple and competing demands on staff energies can lead to situations where staff resent activity changes. It is important that schools include school-wide support strategies within existing school activities. For example, schools may already have an existing, school-improvement process that addresses policy, general climate issues, and overall instructional focus priorities. The process of improving school-wide supports is well suited to the actions of the existing school improvement team. Leadership teams consider current initiatives and committees that exist within the schools and these are combined to focus on the overall mission/goals of the school.

There are several key components involved in providing a school-wide, multi-tier model of supports. One of the most important issues is the presence of effective instruction. Schools need to establish a core instructional program (including materials and practices) to support students to achieve grade-level criteria. The intensity of instruction (e.g., focus of instruction, time allocation, fidelity of implementation, size of instructional groups) varies with the

intensity of the student’s needs. The chosen practices should focus on the most important variable and have demonstrated success for students. It is important to remember that the integrity of implementation of these school-wide support activities will be weak unless there are supports for staff as well as students. School staff need clear directions and information on how to implement these activities. It is essential to provide staff with a planned direction and then feedback on the effectiveness of implementation efforts. In addition to information, staffs also need resources to support the instructional practices and initiatives that compete with the staff’s time/resources.

## **Frequent Measures of Student Performance Needed**

Identifying the level of support needed for an individual student depends upon frequent and on going measures of student performance. As the student’s need for academic and/or behavior support intensifies, so too does the need for more comprehensive understanding of the conditions under which the student is unsuccessful. Focusing on the individual needs of a student begins with the classroom teacher and is enhanced through additional support networks. These supports may include grade-level teams, student assistant teams, and child study teams. When there is a strong possibility that a student will not be successful, teams need to gather more information in order to develop a more powerful intervention plan. In other words, the team members involved must consider how confident they are in understanding why the child is having difficulty. This information involves both diagnostic tools (tools to match interventions to student need) and progress monitoring tools (tools to determine if the student is successful at a rate that will accelerate performance to “catch-up” to peers).

In the MiBLSi model, all students’ reading performances are measured three times per year (i.e., September, January, and May). This process creates benchmarks for all students, which allows staff to screen for possible

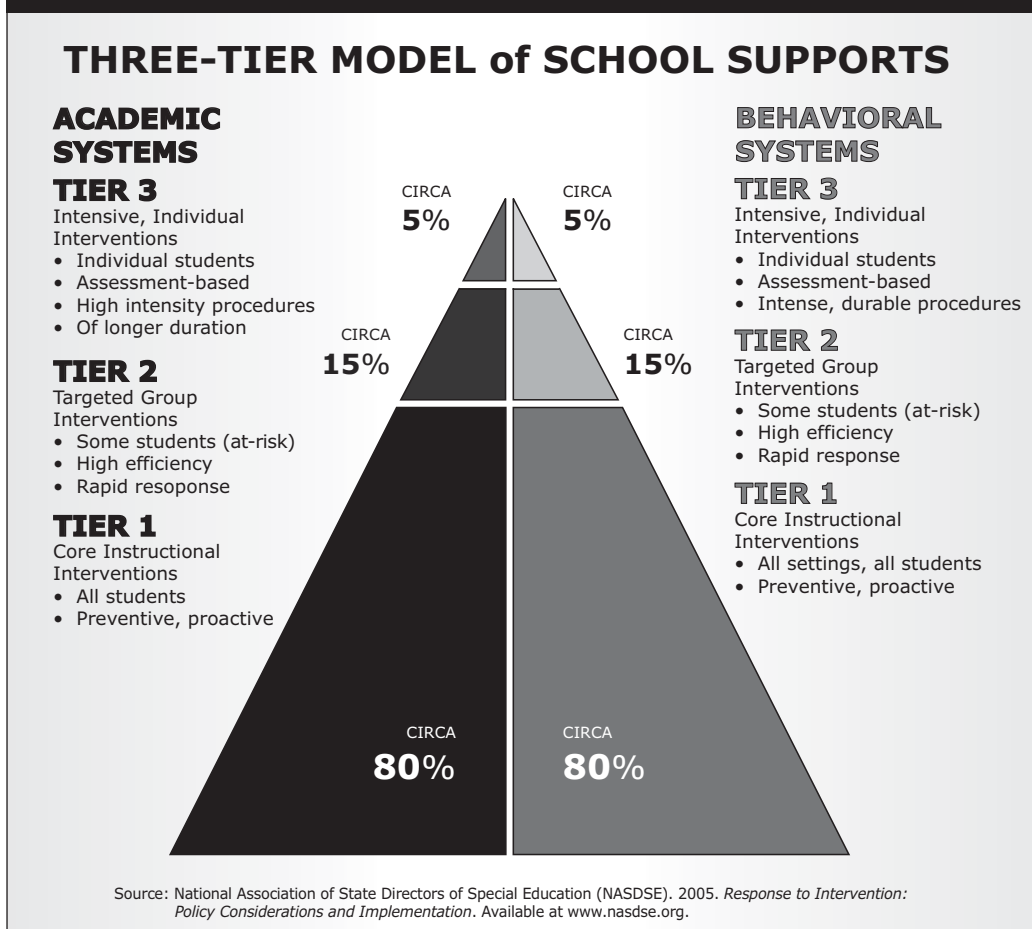
difficulties in reading. A student at greater risk for not demonstrating adequate progress needs a greater amount of progress monitoring using frequent, brief measures of the skill of concern. Student progress should be reviewed, and supports implemented, in a timely manner. Students who are doing well may need only periodic monitoring and modification of the program. Those who are less successful need more frequent monitoring, with more frequent modification and intervention.

The MiBLSi framework involves a three-tiered model of support (Figure 1). The first tier is intended to be preventive and proactive. At this level, it is important to provide a core program that is sufficient for getting most students to grade level. Core instruction should involve a core curriculum research-based with proven success and implemented with sufficient time and integrity. This first tier of the model is intended to reduce the number of students who would need specific

additional supports and provide staff with an understanding of where a student's specific support needs are located. Staff should then focus on using assessments to identify the weaknesses of the core program, with the ultimate goal of strengthening the core program by adding instructional focus in areas identified as weak by the assessments. The strengthening of the core program provides an emphasis on prevention.

Even when the core program has been strengthened, there will still be students who continue to have difficulty. A second tier provides support for students who need extra support in addition to the core. This supplemental instruction is provided to small groups of students. Strategic instruction at the second tier level focuses on additional instructional time in the area of a specific subject or curriculum area of deficit. Strategic intervention should focus on the most important critical skill area that will make a difference in student outcomes.

**Figure 1**



Steve Goodman, Ph.D.  
Co-director of Michigan's  
Integrated Behavior and  
Learning Support Initiative  
Ottawa Area Intermediate  
School District  
13565 Port Sheldon Street  
Holland, MI 49424  
(877) 702-8600 ext. 4027  
[sgoodman@oaisd.org](mailto:sgoodman@oaisd.org)

Gloria Johnson,  
Ph.D., Psychologist,  
Huron Intermediate School  
District (HISD)  
(989) 269-3468  
[gjjohnso@hisd.k12.mi.us](mailto:gjjohnso@hisd.k12.mi.us)

Margie McGlinchey, Ph.D.  
Co-director of Michigan's  
Integrated Behavior and  
Learning Support Initiative  
Kalamazoo Regional  
Educational Service  
Agency  
1819 East Milham Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49002  
(269) 385-1581  
[mmcglinck@kresanet.org](mailto:mmcglinck@kresanet.org)

Kathryn Schallmo  
Co-director of Michigan's  
Integrated Behavior and  
Learning Support Initiative  
Macomb Intermediate  
School District  
44001 Garfield Road  
Clinton Township, MI  
48038  
[kschallmo@misd.net](mailto:kschallmo@misd.net)

Patricia Steinert-Otto,  
Ph.D., Psychologist,  
Kalamazoo Public Schools  
(KPS), WSTaR Elementary  
(269) 337-0810  
[Steinert-OttoPL@kalamazoo.k12.mi.us](mailto:Steinert-OttoPL@kalamazoo.k12.mi.us)



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

## DIBELS

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. The DIBELS are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills (DIBELS, 2006).

Kalamazoo Public Schools staff use DIBELS scores to group students for intervention, monitor student progress, identify skill gaps that may affect future reading, and better understand the specific difficulties of struggling readers.

Huron ISD local schools use DIBELS as an early elementary standard assessment to monitor student progress.

For example, in reading, a student should be able to decode 50 sounds per minute and recode 15 words by the middle of first grade. A student who may not be making adequate progress towards this goal, or a student who missed achieving the goal, will need more instruction time in this area. A student in this group may require monthly progress monitoring so that staff can evaluate the instruction to determine its adequacy and get students back on track.

A third tier of the MiBLSi model addresses the needs of a remaining few students who continue to experience significant difficulties. These students need substantial support. Assessment for this group involves progress monitoring that takes place weekly. As with each tier level, it is critical to provide support to students with instruction that has documented success. Instruction for a student in the tier three support group involves more than remediation. Instruction must also accelerate the rate of learning so the student can catch up to peers. Instructional time is so valuable for this group that staff cannot afford to waste precious time with interventions that have little or no history of success. Implementation of tier three supports comes from a combination of grade level teams/classroom staff, student assistance/child study team, and ancillary staff support.

### Some Closing Thoughts

One possible misunderstanding of the RtI model is a fear that students will no

longer be eligible for special education services. One might think that a student who has not been successful in level one and level two supports should be considered as automatically eligible for special education. The problem with this way of thinking is that the dynamic active nature of the instruction is deemphasized. The purpose of the multi-tiered model is to provide responsive intervention based on student performance to promote increased successful outcomes. Sometimes, elaborate interventions are planned for an individual student without a clear link to the student's needs, or the intervention is never adequately implemented.

Even when an intervention is linked to student need and implemented with integrity, the student may make little or no progress as indicated through progress monitoring assessments. When a student struggles with academic success, it is necessary to raise the intensity of the intervention through increased instructional time, increased teacher-directed explicit instruction using evidenced-based programs, and increased opportunities for active engagement in the learning activity through smaller group sizes and increased learning trials. Throughout this process, it is important to emphasize the need to implement scientific research-based programs with sufficient time and integrity.

For more information visit [www.cenmi.org/miblsi/](http://www.cenmi.org/miblsi/).

## Urban Schools Implement Response to Intervention Model

### Moving Toward an RtI Model in Kalamazoo Public Schools

by Patricia Steinert-Otto

Over the past few years, Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) professionals have been working on development of a Response to Intervention (RtI) educational service delivery model. It is interesting to realize that this work did not necessarily begin with knowledge of

RtI as a service delivery model, or an awareness of the RtI model's special education roots. Rather, the "pre-RtI" model in Kalamazoo was the result of a continued desire for excellence in educational service. At KPS, the early intervention model is rooted in concepts



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

basic to several different grant initiatives. These include federal capacity building initiative (CBI), the Reading First grants, and the Michigan Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi). Through the implementation of these grants, KPS has established the structure and procedures needed to deliver a model of educational service delivery similar to the RtI model as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004. Both IDEA 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) stress the use of professionally sound interventions and instruction based on research. In addition, both require the delivery of effective reading and behavior programs that will result in improved student performance.

According to the recent document, *Response to Intervention: Policy and Implementation* published by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), December 2005, RtI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs, using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions (see side bar). KPS first developed RtI processes and procedures for language arts through work done within the grants and framework named previously. Core reading curricula and

interventions were selected based on research. All instruction and interventions continue to be used based on the effectiveness of results data with students at KPS as defined in IDEA 2004. KPS staff are using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment tool to monitor student reading skill development and to identify children at risk for reading failure (See sidebar on page 4). Additionally, the CBI and MiBLSi grants have, to date, assisted nine KPS elementary schools to focus on school climate by teaching the principles involved in Positive Behavior Support (PBS). School-wide PBS includes a broad range of research-based systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior with all students. The grant initiatives have provided KPS school teams with information on effective PBS practices, interventions, and systems change strategies that have a long history of empirical support and development.

Through the MiBLSi grant, KPS staff have been trained in the use of the School Wide Information System (SWIS), a Web-based information system designed to help school personnel use office referral data to design school-wide and individual student interventions. SWIS has

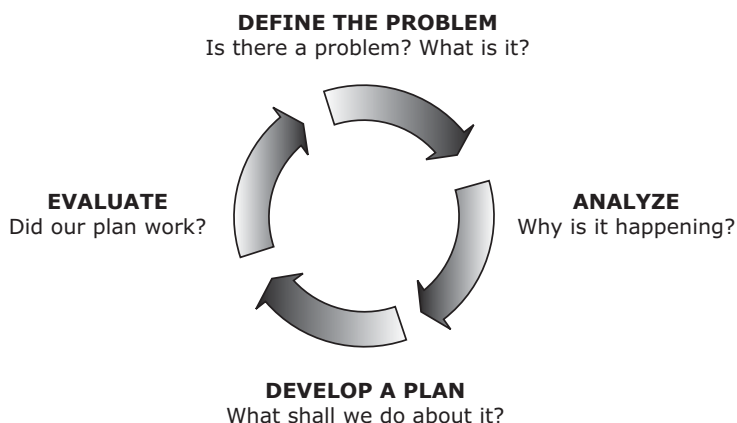
## Learning Rate and Level of Performance

Learning rate refers to a student's growth in achievement or behavior competencies over time compared to prior levels of performance and peer growth rates. Level of performance refers to a student's relative standing on some dimension of achievement/performance compared to expected performance (either criterion- or norm-referenced). Learning rates and levels of performance vary significantly across students. Most students with achievement or behavioral challenges respond positively to explicit and intense instruction/interventions. Decisions about the use of more or less intense interventions are made using information on learning rate and level.

—NASDSE, 2005

Figure 2

## PROBLEM-SOLVING METHOD



Source: National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). 2005. *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation*. Available at [www.nasdse.org](http://www.nasdse.org).



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05





*FOCUS on Results* is produced and distributed through an IDEA Mandated Activities Project for an Education Information Network, known as the Center for Educational Networking, awarded by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to the Eaton Intermediate School District (ISD). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education or Eaton ISD and no endorsement is inferred. This document is in the public domain and may be copied for further distribution when proper credit is given.

provided staff with information used to evaluate the effectiveness of systems in a variety of contexts, including school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and individual. At the same time, SWIS also provides individual student behavioral data for use in accomplishing functional behavior assessment and developing behavior intervention plans. The focus of these initiatives has been the establishment of effective systems to meet the needs of all students in general and special education.

In keeping with the RtI core principles, the intent of the KPS service delivery model is to intervene early with the inherent belief that schools can effectively teach ALL children. On an ongoing basis, a multi-tier model based on a triangle (universal, strategic or targeted, and intensive) of educational service delivery is used where students receive more intense intervention based on their skill development (Figure 1, page 3). Additionally, a systematic problem-solving method is used for data based decision-making (Figure 2, page 5).

With leadership from the KPS Assistant Superintendent/Director of Special Education, the special education consultant staff, including psychologists, social workers, and teacher consultants have been meeting biweekly to study and train to meet the role requirements of this new service delivery model. For example, the group focused on evaluation techniques, such as curriculum based evaluation in all academic areas and functional behavior assessment. The group reviewed documents on RtI, including the NASDSE document, and discussed and practiced use of a systematic problem solving method for decision making. The group worked together to brainstorm individual cases and establish data collection procedures to measure progress in a variety of areas of functioning.

Many KPS professionals regularly participate with their school teams in the training provided by MiBLSi. Some ancillary staff participate in additional training to be school coaches and trainers. At this point in time, the group has embraced the tenants of RtI and is

working on an ongoing basis to assist schools to fully utilize these effective strategies. Additionally, the group has begun work to embed processes within the model, such as a rubric for special education qualification.

## **The Role of Special Education Consultants and Evaluation Personnel Changes With RtI**

In the course of this study and training, it has become apparent that the role of special education consultant and evaluation personnel changes with implementation of an RtI service delivery model. As noted, RtI is a school-wide model, and, as such, is intended to improve education for all students.

Immediately, focus is extended from the restrictive role of evaluating candidates for special education to assisting in providing services to meet the needs of each and every student. With the focus of RtI on school-wide systems, the role is shifted to providing ongoing support to teaching staff in providing instruction to all students. Thus, in order to support schools in the implementation of the RtI model, psychologists, social workers, and teacher consultants need to bring expertise in a variety of areas. Specifically, these professionals need to be "experts" in data analysis, program implementation, problem-solving, and assessment.

Data analysis expertise requires the skills to:

- Specify, collect, compile, summarize, analyze, and present data to various educational stakeholders including parents, teachers, staff, and administrators.
- Promote and assist with data generation and analysis for all students, at all levels of the triangle: universal, strategic, and intensive.
- Meet with staff regularly to assist with review, analysis, and understanding of data as generated through various systems, including but not limited to: curriculum based measurement, SWIS, specific behavior interventions, DIBELS, and progress monitoring.



Program implementation expertise requires the skills to:

- Promote, support, and instruct others in the use of scientific, research-based programs.
- Provide direct services to students using scientific, research-based programs when needed, particularly to model for staff.
- Meet with staff to review program effectiveness through data analysis.
- Assist with monitoring to ensure program integrity.
- Lead intervention revision as indicated by progress monitoring data.
- Pursue ongoing professional development to gain and maintain skills with regard to various scientific, research-based programs.

Problem solving expertise requires the skills to:

- Take a leadership role in problem solving through the use of a valid problem solving model.
- Assist with problem solving for all students, at all levels of the three tier model: universal, strategic, and intensive.
- Gather and compile data for individual student assessment to provide the basis for problem solving and intervention development.
- Assist persons (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents) with analysis and summary of needs, written description of plan, acquisition of materials, logistics of implementation, data recording, maintenance of program integrity, data analysis, and intervention revision.

- Assist problem-solving teams in defining academic and/or behavioral objectives and graphing benchmarks for expected progress within a time line.
- Observe the intervention process to identify possible emotional/behavioral issues and environmental conflicts that may impede student progress and assist the team in eliminating these issues/conflicts.
- Find creative ways to involve students in the process and to motivate reluctant students.

Assessment expertise requires the skills to:

- Use assessment for three different purposes: screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.
- Accomplish and assist with accurate appropriate, specific, valid, and reliable assessment of students.
- Assist district/school in determining what is necessary and sufficient for formative and summative evaluation of student progress.
- Assist parents, teams/staff, administrators, and other stakeholders with the understanding that the process of RTI is an assessment.

Individually and as a group, consultants are working hard to develop/maintain the expertise to assist our school teams in these many areas. It is a daunting task and staff is humble in the face of all there is to know and understand in these areas, but they are excited to continue with this necessary work. This group is working to support schools to meet the KPS goal of educating "Every Child, Every Opportunity, Every Time."

---

## Rural Schools Implement RtI Models

by Gloria Johnson

During the early 1990s, Huron Intermediate School District (HISD) realized that a change was needed in the delivery of school psychological services to local districts. There seemed to be an inappropriate amount of students with reading difficulties. With so many

students needing support, by the time a student was behind enough to be considered for a special education referral, prevention was no longer an option. Something different needed to happen.



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

## HISD Implements Data-Based Decision Making for Tier 3 Students Countywide

HISD secured in-service programs from the University of Cincinnati, Department of School Psychology. Janet Graden and Ed Lentz came to HISD and helped train local intervention assistance teams. Soon after, HISD's county-wide prevention and early intervention services were prepared to reduce the severity and frequency of reading difficulties. HISD used periodic reading screenings for all students in general education. The assessment used was more closely tied to the curriculum and thus more meaningful to teachers as they planned instruction.

Monitoring student progress became a more standard practice. Many HISD local schools use DIBELS as the early elementary standard assessment to monitor student progress. Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) assessment of Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) is used as a standard assessment for students in upper elementary grades.

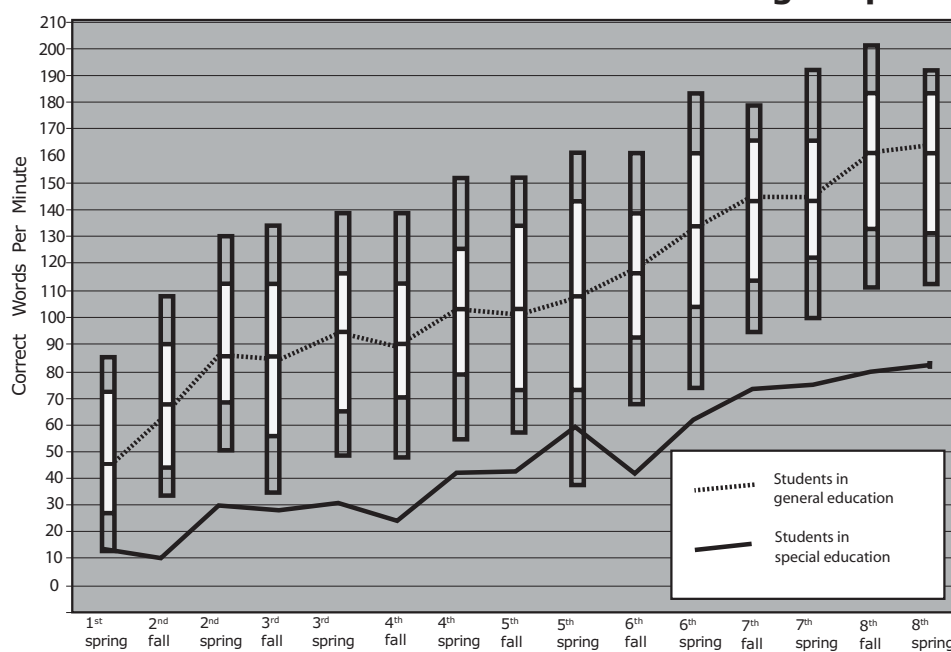
Teachers and parents in the HISD welcomed reading interventions and

appreciated concrete data, in the form of graphs, showing student performance in grade level comparisons and individual student improvement over time in reference to reading goals. Using general education norms, HISD documented the status and discrepancy of the performance between each special education student and his or her general education grade level peers. This information would be used for determining the student's Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) at individualized education program (IEP) meetings. HISD school psychologists work now centered on prevention and early intervention all education settings. HISD was making a real difference in the lives of many students.

All ISD and local district special education teachers attended in-service training to learn how to administer and score DIBELS (early elementary) and ORF (upper elementary) measures for PLAAFP assessments and monitoring of students' reading progress. As teachers became comfortable with new assessments and procedures, HISD analyzed the data that was collected and asked some tough questions:

**Figure 3**

### HISD Grade Level Performance Reading Graph







## State Board of Education

Kathleen N. Straus, *President*  
John C. Austin, *Vice President*  
Carolyn L. Curtin, *Secretary*  
Marianne Yared McGuire, *Treasurer*  
Nancy Danhof, *NASBE Delegate*  
Elizabeth W. Bauer  
Reginald M. Turner  
Eileen Lappin Weiser

### Ex-Officio

Jennifer M. Granholm,  
*Governor*  
Michael P. Flanagan,  
*Superintendent of  
Public Instruction*



**MICHIGAN**  
Department of  
**Education**

*Office of Special Education and  
Early Intervention Services*

- Are our special education students showing growth?
- Is the growth enough to close the gap between special education students and their grade-level peers?
- What research based interventions are available in special education classrooms?
- What can teachers do to improve student skills and decrease the discrepancy gap?

Using data collected by the ISD, during general education norming activities and data on stuents collected by special education teachers, the graph in Figure 3 shows HISD grade level reading performance.

Figure 3 depicts the range of oral reading fluency skills of students within HISD between the 10th and 90th percentiles in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades in the fall and spring of the year. The center of each bar represents the average range. The median scores of students in general education are shaded. The median scores of students in special education are indicated on the line below the bars.

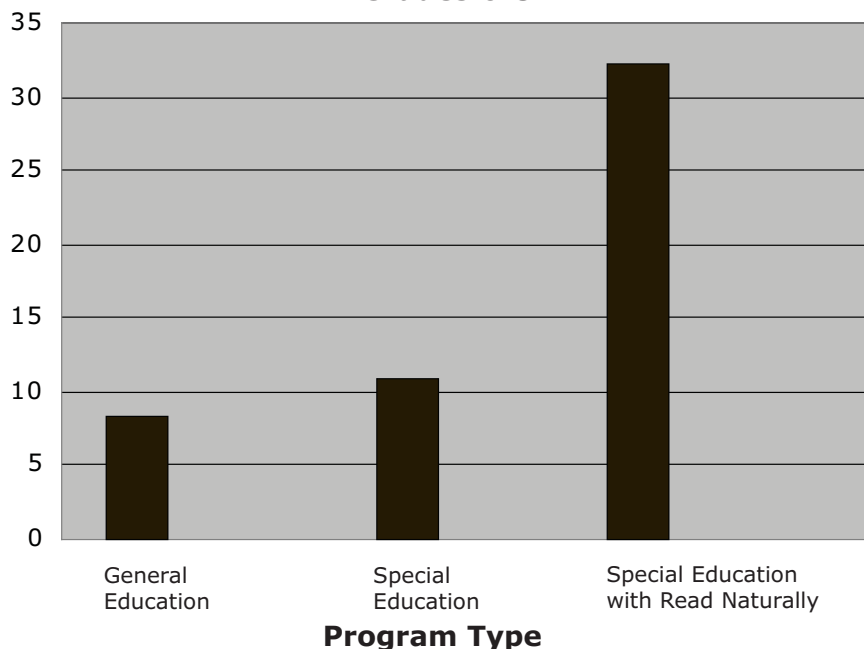
## What Did the Data Indicate?

The average reading scores of students with individualized education programs (IEPs) were below that of their peers in general education (Figure 3). Students with IEPs improved as evidenced by the general upward slope of the line below the bars. Although student growth was achieved, the gap was not yet closed. Based on the data, HISD decided that a powerful research-based intervention was needed to make a meaningful difference.

A junior high special education teacher was involved in an intervention program called Read Naturally. Data indicated impressive growth in students taught with the Read Naturally program (Figure 4). HISD was encouraged and brought this research based intervention to every special education classroom. With combined capacity building money, additional grant money awarded through Michigan Department of Education/Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services mini-grants, HISD was able to provide each special education classroom in the school district with a complete set of Read Naturally materials and provide a day long Read

**Figure 4**

### Growth in Oral Reading Fluency Using Read Naturally Grades 6-8



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

## Statement of Compliance with Federal Law

The Michigan Department of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education.

## Compliance with Title IX

What Title IX is: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is the landmark federal law that bans sex discrimination in schools, whether it is in curricular, extra-curricular or athletic activities.

Title IX states: "No person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid."

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX), and its implementing regulation, at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. The MDE, as a recipient of federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education (USDOE), is subject to the provisions of Title IX. MDE does not discriminate based on gender in employment or in any educational program or activity that it operates.

The designated individual at the Michigan Department of Education for inquiries and complaints regarding Title IX is:

Roberta E. Stanley, Director,  
Office of Administrative Law and  
Federal Relations, Michigan  
Department of Education, Hannah  
Building, 608 West Allegan, P.O.  
Box 30008, Lansing, Michigan  
48909, Phone: (517) 335-0436,  
Email: stanleyr@michigan.gov.

This document was printed  
25,000 times at a per piece cost  
of 0.13 cents.

If you need assistance making  
this publication accessible for a  
person with a visual impairment,  
please contact the Center for  
Educational Networking (CEN) at  
(800) 593-9146.

Download copies of  
*FOCUS on Results* at  
[www.cenmi.org/Products.asp](http://www.cenmi.org/Products.asp)

For more information or  
inquiries about this project,  
contact the Center for  
Educational Networking,  
Eaton Intermediate School  
District, 1790 E. Packard  
Hwy., Charlotte, MI 48813.



Issue #7, Volume #2  
GATA 06-05

[www.cenmi.org](http://www.cenmi.org)

Naturally in-service to all special education K-12 teachers. Teachers were asked to review the needs of their students and use Read Naturally to address the oral reading fluency needs of at least some of their students in the coming year. They were also requested to forward spring ORF scores on grade level PLEP (norming) passages to the ISD.

After the program was completed and data was returned, it was evident that teachers did not use the Read Naturally program with enough students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> grades to make reporting of differences meaningful. Review of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade data revealed substantial use of Read Naturally and improvement for students in upper elementary and junior high. In the following year, teachers were asked to continue using Read Naturally and to add

another research-based reading intervention called REWARDS. HISD continued to provide in-service to all special education teachers K-12 and provided all materials needed to implement REWARDS.

After two years of research-based instruction designed to improve fluency (Read Naturally) and fluency and phonics (REWARDS), HISD not only saw countywide improvement in special education student skills, but a noticeable narrowing in the gap between special education students and their general education peers. The results took time and continued effort to collect and analyze. Using research-based reading interventions, students in special education are now making meaningful growth at HISD.

## RESOURCES

Brown-Chidsey, R., & Steege, M. W. (2005). *Response to intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice*. The Guilford Press. New York, NY.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (2005). *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation*. Retrieved May 30, 2006, from [www.nasds.org](http://www.nasds.org).

Read Naturally. The Read Naturally program combines three research—proven strategies to develop the reading fluency of special education, English Language Learners, Title I, and mainstream students. Retrieved May 30, 2006, from [www.readnaturally.com/company/default.htm](http://www.readnaturally.com/company/default.htm).

The School-Wide Information System (SWIS). Web-based information system designed to help school personnel use office referral data to design school-wide and individual student interventions. Retrieved May 30, 2006, from [www.swis.org/index.php](http://www.swis.org/index.php).

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). A set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills. Retrieved May 30, 2006, from <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>.

## Michigan Special Education Web Sites

Michigan Department of Education (MDE)  
Office of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS)  
[www.michigan.gov/ose-eis](http://www.michigan.gov/ose-eis)

Center for Educational Networking (CEN)  
[www.cenmi.org](http://www.cenmi.org)