

Balanced Assessment System for Continuous Review of Student Progress

Draft language for WI DPI's RtI Guidance Document

Continuous review of student progress within a RtI system involves a balanced, systematic process of constant inquiry that uses multiple measures to determine: the current skill level of a student or group of students; how students are responding to core curriculum and instruction; and how students are responding to interventions or additional challenges. No single test score should determine a student's experience at any phase of a RtI system. Rather, multiple types of data should be gathered, and their scientific evidence should be considered. Educator and family expertise should also be sought in making decisions about the kinds of data collected (e.g. teacher observation, family interview, benchmark assessment scores, student self assessment, etc.), and should be considered as part of understanding the whole picture of a student's performance. In seeking broad experience and expertise in choosing and implementing assessment procedures, schools will better consider culturally responsive practices that reflect the identity, community, sense of belonging and relevance of the group of students and families served. Within a RtI system, screening and progress monitoring play a critical role in determining how best to respond to student need.

Universal screening is a process in which data from multiple measures is accurately analyzed to determine whether each student is likely to meet, exceed, or not meet benchmarks and can be constructed for both academic and behavioral purposes. A screener is an assessment given as one part of the screening process to establish a benchmark from which students are beginning, and to align the instructional starting point to student need. Screeners are typically a form of data collection designed to be easy, quick and repeatable. Again, no single piece of data should determine a student's experience within a RtI system; multiple types of data (survey, interview, teacher observation, etc.) should be collected to assist in a complete universal screening process. Data from the universal screening process are used to make decisions about interventions, and additional challenges. It is also important to note that universal screening data can be examined to determine if a change in core curriculum and instruction is needed.

Progress monitoring is a process used to assess a student's academic and behavioral performance, to measure student improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction (NCRTI, 2009). This process is also used to monitor a student's response to specific interventions or additional challenges. Progress monitoring can be formal (quantifiable, norm-referenced tools) or informal (teacher-developed formative tools) and can be implemented with individual students or an entire class. The frequency of progress monitoring will increase with the intensity of an intervention or additional challenge. Like universal screening, progress monitoring is a process and thus, data should include multiple pieces of evidence with a focus on individual student improvement as well as student subgroup improvement.

RtI is a system for increased success for *all* students, and universal screening and progress monitoring are central to this system. RtI may also be used as a method for identifying students with **specific learning disabilities (SLD)**. As a student moves further toward a process of a SLD determination, by rule, the criteria of progress monitoring tools becomes more stringent to ensure strict consistency, fidelity and reliability across the state. Making educational decisions based on multiple types of data is equally important to this process. For more information on the SLD determination process as it relates to a RtI system, see <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ld.html>.