Peer Review Intervention Solicitation

March 20, 2015

Tennessee Department of Education

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BACKGROUND

The State Board of Education approved a policy change for using a Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI^2) framework as the means to identify a student with a specific learning disability (SLD) as of July 1, 2014. The State released the RTI^2 manual and requirements for meeting the expectations in August 2013. The manual includes guidance related to high-quality instruction, skills-specific universal screening, research-based intervention, progress monitoring and expectation for identification of students with a specific learning disability. The manual can be found on www.tncore.org or www.tnspdg.com.

As of July 1, 2014, Tennessee will no longer have the option of the cognitive ability-achievement discrepancy model previously used to identify students with SLD in grades K-12. Local education agencies (LEAs) are permitted to apply for an extension of this deadline for grades 6-8 through July 1, 2015 and grades 9-12 through July 1, 2016.

The policy change approved by the State Board of Education requires the use of a skills based universal screener and progress monitoring tool with the RTI^2 framework to assist with identifying students that have skills deficits and require evidence based interventions at Tier II or Tier III. All students receiving intervention must be progress monitored to determine if the intervention is effective in meeting their need. For those students that do not respond to intervention at Tier II or Tier III, RTI^2 is also the framework used to identify students with a Specific Learning Disability. In addition to the RTI^2 framework, on Oct. 21, 2014, the department released a special education framework manual that focused on evidence based interventions and the most intensive interventions through special education.

LEAs have requested help with identifying evidenced-based interventions that will assist them in closing achievement gaps for students that are furthest behind as indicated through the RTI^2 and Special Education Framework. In response to this need, the department is facilitating an intervention peer review process designed to assist Tennessee educators in the selection of evidence-based interventions to meet students' needs and to support student growth toward proficiency in the areas of reading, math and writing. The end result will be identification of interventions that meet criteria in specific areas and allow for LEAs to make more informed decisions regarding the relevance of existing interventions and future purchases.

This is not a solicitation to contract with the state or LEAs. LEAs will not be required to purchase from vendors that have submitted to be a part of the peer review process.

Intervention Peer Review Process Introduction:
In response to district requests, the Tennessee Department of Education is facilitating a review process of interventions that will result in an end-user, intervention guide to help support good decisions for struggling students. Strong and supportive leadership is essential to the success of all decisions made for students. The review process will be focused on training school and district leaders to make informed decisions about interventions they already have and for future purchases. The intent of the review process is to help build LEA capacity in reviewing vendors/products that meet the needs of student's within their district and help develop internal structures so future decisions may be based on information and needs of their population.

LEA representatives will participate in the review process and the CORE office in each region will be leading the review. Selected LEA representatives will independently review each technical response against the evaluation criteria and will rate each intervention using the solicitation rubric. Each vendor/product will be evaluated by three reviewers. An additional review will be conducted if there are inconsistencies. An end-user guidance document will be created and each product will be identified on this document as having "Met" or "Not Met" the evaluated categories. Again, please note that LEAs will not be required to purchase or use interventions evaluated through this process.

Any vendor may submit a product or products to be reviewed. All products submitted for review will be included in the end user guidance document. The intervention solicitation is posted here for your convenience. Additionally, vendors who have requested notification of solicitations will be contacted directly. The timeline is detailed in the schedule of events below.

Intervention Peer Review Rubric Categories:

Section	Review Area	Metrics for Each area	Overall Rating

Section 1	Area(s) of Deficit	Yes or No	Met or Not Met
Section 2	Internal Validity External Validity Peer Reviewed	Yes or No	Met or Not Met
Section 3	Systematic Instruction Explicit Instruction	Yes or No	Met or Not Met
Section 4	Intervention Intensity (Tier II, Tier III or Most Intensive intervention, Special Education Intervention) Grade Level	Yes or No	Met or Not Met
Section 5	Teacher Usability	Yes or No	Met or Not Met

Intervention Peer Reviewed Process SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	TIME (central time zone)	DATE (all dates are state business days)
1. Request Issued		Monday, March 20, 2015
2. Response Deadline	2 p.m.	Friday, April 3, 2015
3. Peer Reviews Held at Regional Meetings		April 13- May 15, 2015
4. State Completion of Technical Response reviews		June 5, 2015
5. Peer Review Intervention Guide released		June 2015

The State reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the appropriateness and adequacy of responses related to this solicitation. The state reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to adjust the release and timeline of events.

Responses to this solicitation must be submitted to Kristi.Harris@tn.gov no later than 2 p.m. Friday, April 3, 2015 CDT.

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710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tie Hodack at Tie.Hodack@tn.gov
Or Tammy.L.Shelton@tn.gov

<u>Peer Review Intervention Solicitation Technical Requirements:</u>
Required: All evidence must be submitted on a flash drive. Given the structure of review, The Tennessee Department of Education is requesting ten flash drives with evidence of the following:

RESPONDENT/Vendor and Product:				
Response Page # (Respondent completes)	**Item Ref.**	**Technical Requirements**	**Evidence Provided Yes/No**	**Section Criteria "Met" or "Not Met"**
	1.	**Provide a narrative that describes the area of deficit in which the intervention will focus and tier of intervention the product has evidence to support.**		
Section 1. Deficit Area				
	2.	Provide Evidence that the product being submitted aligns with 1 or more of the following area(s) and is not focused on grade level standards: Basic Reading, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, Math Problem Solving, Math Calculation and/or Written Expression.		
	3.	Provide evidence that the intervention (program) does address the area of deficit listed.		
	4.	Provide evidence that the area of deficit(s) listed by the vendor matches the Tennessee definition under the RTI² Framework for Basic reading, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, Math Problem Solving, Math Calculation and/or Written Expression.		
Section 2. Metric Validity				
	5.	Provide evidence of practical significance (provides an indication of the magnitude of the intervention's effect. The larger the effect size, the larger the impact of the intervention). An effect size of .25 or greater is desired.		
	6.	Provide evidence that there is a measurement of fidelity of implementation that was		

		conducted adequately and observed with adequate intercoder agreement, and levels of fidelity indicate that the intervention program was implemented as intended (at 75% or above).		
	7.	Provide evidence that students in the study were at-risk (i.e., below 30th percentile on local or national norm; or sample mean below 25th percentile on local or national norms; or students with identified disability) and evidence that they were randomly assigned to the intervention.		
	8.	Provide evidence of positive findings across multiple studies: -Tier II -Tier III -Provide evidence of positive findings across multiple studies including a single-case design. A single-case design is used to examine intensive intervention impact. Single-case designs systematically manipulate the intervention within and across students to show an intervention's causal effect. It also requires a stable baseline prior to intervention implementation, and at least 3 replications at different points in time.-Special Education Intervention		
	9.	Provide evidence of at least two research studies that were repeated/replicated.		
	10.	Provide evidence of a random sample population from multiple schools. (For example, a study that only sampled from one school could not be generalized to cover children in an entire state).		
	11.	Provide evidence of a large sample size. (n>75)		
	12.	The vendor provided two peer-reviewed articles, published in a research journal, that indicate the intervention has showed improvement in student growth.		
	13.	Provide evidence that the intervention has been judged as sound by professionals.		
Section 3. Systematic Explicit				

	14.	Provide evidence of a carefully-planned sequence for instruction.		
	15.	Provide evidence that lessons build on previously taught information, from simple to complex, with clear, concise student objectives.		
	17.	Provide evidence of face-to-face teaching that is highly structured, focused on specific learning outcomes, and based on a high level of student and teacher interaction.		
	18.	Provide evidence of support for teachers in modeling skills, thinking, and behaviors.		
	19.	Provide evidence that the majority (over 50 percent) of the program is direct intervention provided by the interventionists.		
Section 4. **Intervention Intensity**				
	20.	A. Provide evidence that the intervention is : • At least 25-30 minutes in duration and can be delivered daily-Tier II • At least 45 in duration and can be delivered daily-Tier II AND/OR • At least 45-60 minutes in duration, individualized, systematic and can be delivered daily (the length is at least 45 minutes in duration daily).		
	21.	Provide evidence that the instructional focus is: • Group intervention focused on a skill(s)-Tier II intervention. • Small group or individual focused on a skill(s)-Tier III intervention AND/OR • Individualized with varying entry and exit points depending on student need-special education intervention.		

	22.	Provide evidence of assessment support: • Intervention provides a group or individualized screening assessment-Tier II • Intervention provides group or individualized screening assessment-Tier III AND/OR • Intervention provides individualized diagnostic assessment.		
	23.	Provide evidence of student engagement and response. • Provide evidence of opportunities for students to respond to the teacher-Tier II • Provide evidence of opportunities to respond frequently to the teacher-Tier III • Provide evidence of individualized response opportunities-Special Education Intervention.		
	24.	Provide evidence of relevant skill and grade level appropriateness.		
	25.	Provide evidence that graphics and materials are age appropriate for students.		
Section 5. Teacher Usability				
	26.	Provide evidence that materials provide instructional support such as the following: introducing and concluding lessons, assessment types, vocabulary, and activities.		
	27.	Provide evidence that materials support teachers in ways such as the following: planning (including ideas for pacing) and record keeping.		
	28.	Provide evidence that materials are clear and easy to read for students, teachers, parents. The design and graphics do not distract from the mathematics.		

Glossary of Terms:

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI^2)

The Framework is a model that promotes recommended practices for an integrated system connecting general and special education by the use of high-quality, scientifically **research-based** instruction and intervention. The RTI^2 Framework is a 3-Tier model that provides an ongoing process of instruction and interventions that allow students to make progress at all levels, particularly those students who are struggling or advancing.

A state manual and implementation guide is available to all local education agencies as of 2013. The *Response to Instruction and Intervention Manual* marks a significant point in our state's development, reflecting our state-level, collective intent to engage in large-scale systems change. The purpose of the *RTI^2 Implementation Guide* is to assist LEAs with school wide problem solving and to equip them with the practical decision-making tools that maintain the integrity of the RTI^2 Framework.

Area of Deficit

In Tennessee, an area of deficit for RTI^2 is defined as basic reading skills, reading comprehension, reading fluency, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving, or written expression.

- Basic reading skills include the ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds in language; to identify printed letters and their associated sounds; to decode written language. Phonemic awareness is commonly defined as the understanding that spoken words are made up of separate units of sound that are blended together when words are pronounced. Phonics is a set of rules that specify the relationship between letters in the spelling of words and the sounds of spoken language. Vocabulary refers to words we need to know to communicate with others.
- Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and make meaning of text. Comprehension involves constructing meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows and thinking about all of this information until it is understood.
- Reading fluency refers to the ability to read words accurately, quickly, and effortlessly. Moreover, fluency skills include the ability to read with appropriate expression and intonation (prosody). Reading fluency is the ability to read with sufficient accuracy and rate to support comprehension. Reading fluency applies to accurately reading on-level fiction, prose, and poetry with expression through repeated reading. Non-fiction and technical reading passages generally requires a slower, more thoughtful level of reading rate to support comprehension. Reading fluency can also be the rate at which young students demonstrate and name their conceptual understanding of letter-sound correspondence, alphabetic knowledge, and reading nonsense words, sight words, sentences, and texts.
- Math (mathematics/mathematical) calculation is the knowledge and retrieval of facts and the application of procedural knowledge in calculation. Math application refers to math flexibility for applications. Students should have the opportunity to apply math in context.
- Math (mathematics/mathematical) problem solving involves using mathematical computation skills, language, reasoning, reading, and visual-spatial skills in solving

problems; applying mathematical knowledge at the conceptual level. Conceptual understanding refers to the conceptual understanding of key concepts, such as place value and ratios. Students should learn concepts from a number of perspectives so that they are able to see math as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures. Procedural skill and fluency refers to the speed and accuracy in calculation. Students need time to practice core functions such as single-digit multiplication so that they have access to more complex concepts and procedures.

- Written Expression is the explicit teaching of critical writing skills, processes, and knowledge as well as less formal techniques like teacher-student conferences and peer-to-peer editing. Students should have opportunities to learn about and practice different genres of writing and share their writing with others.

Intervention

Support at the school level for students performing below grade-level expectations. Educational professionals determine academic intervention needs of students (determined by ongoing data), determine methods for dealing with academic issues, and – most important – monitor on an ongoing basis whether these methods are resulting in increased student learning and achievement.

Tier II Intervention

Tier II intervention is in addition to the instruction provided in Tier I and should meet the needs of 10-15% of students. Students who score below the designated cut score on the **universal screening** will receive more **intense** intervention in Tier II.

Tier II interventions: are **systematic**, **research-based** interventions that target the student's identified area of deficit (basic reading skill(s), reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving or written expression). Interventions will be developed based on the unique needs of students. Interventions that have been researched to have the greatest chance of addressing the area of need will be selected. There will be evidence that interventions are more **intense** than Tier I.

Tier III Intervention:

Students at this level should receive daily, intensive, small group, or individual intervention targeting specific area(s) of deficit, which are more **intense** than interventions received in Tier II.

Tier III interventions will be **systematic**, **research-based** interventions that target the student's identified area of deficit (basic reading skill(s), reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving, or written expression). Interventions will be developed based on the unique needs of students. Interventions that have been researched to have the greatest chance of addressing the area of need should be selected. There will be evidence that interventions are more **intense** than Tier II.

Special Education Intervention

The purpose of intensive interventions is to address significant and persistent difficulties in a specific deficit area (defined above) and includes individualization of the intervention. A single-case design can be used to examine intensive intervention impact. Many of the same internal validity criteria described above also apply to single-case design. Single-case designs systematically manipulate the intervention within and across students to show an intervention's causal effect. It also requires a stable baseline prior to intervention implementation, and at least 3 replications at different points in time.

Students who qualify for special education with a **Specific Learning Disability** will be assigned interventions and services to meet their need through their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Special education interventions and services must be the most intensive level of intervention. The student will remain in the **core instruction** (Tier I) with the content expert to the extent possible and will have access to the most intensive interventions to meet their specific area of need in addition to core instruction. The same **problem-solving approach used in RTI² which includes using data to inform intervention decisions and progress monitor** will be used to determine appropriate intervention for students that have an IEP. Furthermore, interventions will be tailored to the student in the area of identified deficit, and progress toward their IEP goals will be monitored weekly or every other week. When students fail to respond to intervention as a result of the provision of special education services, a data team that includes the special education teacher may determine if an intervention program is or is not effective for the student. If a change is service is to occur, then an IEP team meeting will be reconvened. There will be evidence that special education interventions are the most intensive offered in a school.

Scientifically research-based

Interventions that produce reliable and valid results. When these interventions are used properly, adequate gains are expected. To be considered research-based, they must have a clear record of success.

Scientifically-based researched interventions have the following characteristics according to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements [No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 1411(e)(2)(C)(xi)]. Scientifically-based research involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs and includes research that:

- Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
- Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
- Relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;
- Is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls;
- Ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and
- Has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.

Evidence Based Intervention

Interventions that have been tested and have demonstrated success with a particular group of students. This means that the research results are reliable and valid. As a result, the research shows there is reasonable evidence to indicate the program or strategies will result in academic gains when used appropriately.

External Validity

The extent to which the results of a study's findings can be applied to other practical settings beyond the controlled research study. External validity criteria includes: Implementation, domains addressed (reading, math), student outcomes measured and treatment acceptability.

Internal Validity

How well a research study was designed to reduce the impact of things not studied (other variables impacting). The level of confidence that positive results are due to the intervention and things not outside of the study. Criteria: Research Design, evidence of confounding factors, group/person conducting the study, developer of assessment, data collection and adequacy of measures and data analysis methods.

Statistical Significance

True differences between the groups studied due to the intervention, there is a low probability of the findings being due to chance. At P=.05, the probability of the results being by chance is less than 1 in 20.

Practical Significance

Provides an indication of the magnitude of the intervention's effect. The larger the effect size, the larger the impact of the intervention. An effect size of .25 or greater is desired.
Replication: Positive findings across multiple studies.

Peer Reviewed

Peer reviewed is used in publishing and in professional settings where work and/or action is examined and reviewed by a group of individuals that have professional credentials and experiential backgrounds that are equivalent to the individual whose work is being reviewed. This process is used to examine work for many purposes. When psychologists try to publish their research, a group of experts (peers) review the work to determine if it meets criteria for publication. They will examine procedures, source materials, study methodology, etc. In professional settings it is used to review behavior, adherence to ethical standards, procedural issues, etc. This method is widely used by universities, hospitals, research foundations and other venues that oversee the work of scholars and other professionals.

Systematic Instruction

Systematic instruction refers to a carefully planned sequence for instruction, similar to a builder's blueprint for a house. A blueprint is carefully thought out and designed before building materials are gathered and construction begins. The plan for systematic instruction is carefully thought out, strategic, and designed before activities and lessons are developed. For systematic instruction, lessons build on previously taught information, from simple to complex, with clear, concise student objectives that are driven by ongoing assessment. Students are provided appropriate practice opportunities, which directly reflect instruction.

Explicit Instruction

Instruction that involves direct, face-to-face teaching that is highly structured, focused on specific learning outcomes, and based on a high level of student and teacher interaction. It involves explanation, demonstration, and practice with topics being taught in a logical order. Another characteristic of explicit teaching is modeling skills, thinking, and behaviors. This also involves the teacher thinking out loud when working through problems and demonstrating processes for students.

Teacher Usability

The intervention is user-friendly for teachers. Materials support teachers in ways such as the following: planning (including ideas for pacing), introducing lessons, assessment types, vocabulary and record keeping. Materials are clear and easy to read for students, teachers, and parents. The design and graphics do not distract from the content.

Intense (intensity)

The measure of strength by which instruction or intervention is delivered. Intensive academic and/or behavioral interventions are characterized by their increased focus for students who fail to respond to less intensive forms of instruction. Intensity can be increased through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementatio