

Response to Intervention and the Schools Attuned® Program

Working Together for Students



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A NON-PROFIT INSTITUTE FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING

Response to Intervention (RtI) and Schools Attuned can work together to make a positive impact on student learning. To understand how RtI and Schools Attuned complement each other, one needs to understand basic information about RtI and Schools Attuned.

What is RtI?

The function of assessment in RtI (also known as early intervening services) is to identify at-risk students as early as possible, to gather relevant data to support educational decision making and to impact what the teacher is doing to improve achievement.

The use of a structured, problem-solving process is a requisite component of RtI. This process assists in the identification of student learning needs and has some basic components. These components include problem identification, analysis of the problem to hypothesize why it is occurring, developing a plan to address the problem and evaluating the student's response to the intervention/plan selected.

Additionally, a structured, systematic problem-solving process assists in the identification of groups of students with similar learning needs and concerns. It assumes that the resources of the entire educational system (at both district and building levels) are needed to function as an integrated system to support and address student learning needs and increase student achievement.¹

Schools Attuned and RtI Parallels

The philosophy behind RtI aligns with that of the Schools Attuned Program:

Schools Attuned	Response to Intervention
Label observable phenomena, not the child	Don't label the child
Specificity of child's learning profile and application of the appropriate interventions and accommodations will lead to learning success	Written intervention plans are tailored for each individual student
Employs a problem-solving process for understanding learners	Involves a problem-solving process
Teaching students about how they learn helps them succeed	Teach students to monitor and chart their progress
Strengthen the strengths and affinities of students and accommodate their weaknesses	Focus on how to make the student more successful (the curriculum failed the student not vice versa)

Is RtI primarily intended for general education or special education classrooms?

Response to Intervention is a tool for assessing and working with struggling learners in the general education classroom. RtI has the potential to improve the accuracy of special education referrals and can lead to earlier identification of students truly in need of special education services.²

What is the Schools Attuned Program?

A professional development program that equips K-12 educators with new knowledge, skills, and strategies so that defensible judgments can be made about instructional practices. This program, designed for general education teachers, offers a system for recognizing variations in learning, by helping educators identify strengths and understand the learning breakdowns of students. The Schools Attuned program gives educators the confidence to meet diverse student learning needs and helps groups of students and individual struggling students understand and take responsibility for their own learning.



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How Schools Attuned Complements RtI

The Schools Attuned Program supports Response to Intervention by enabling teachers to more easily pinpoint learning differences and by providing the tools and strategies to understand and manage those differences. After taking the Schools Attuned course, educators are able to modify instructional practices to facilitate student learning in the general classroom. And, by becoming a partner in their own learning, students can begin to advocate for their learning needs and manage their own strengths and weaknesses. Additional benefits include the following:

- Research-based strategies in Schools Attuned provide scientifically-proven accommodations and interventions to use with students
- Some of the tools and processes from Schools Attuned support the documentation requirements of RtI

What Funding is Available to Support Schools Attuned Training?

Money is available to states through IDEA funding to support districts that choose to work with general education teachers to use "early intervening services." This is an optional use of IDEA funds and requires the request to the USDOE to be part of the state plan for special education. Therefore, districts should tell their state director of special education they want to access these funds to bring the Schools Attuned program to their general education teachers to help them implement RtI.

The Impact of RtI and Schools Attuned

RtI and a neurodevelopmental approach to learning can support each other to help students and their teachers. A system for understanding learning and learners, such as the Schools Attuned Program, helps teachers more readily pinpoint learning breakdowns so that interventions can be implemented in a timely manner. This supports the tiered approach of Response to Intervention. With the knowledge, skills and tools to apply interventions at each tier, students receive help before they "fall through the cracks" or are referred for special education services.

Contact us for more information about the Schools Attuned Program

Visit our website at

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¹ NASDSE and CASE White Paper on RtI, May 2006

² NCLD and NASDSE website