Guidance for the Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities

Prepared by the LCISD Learning Disability Guidelines Committee 2010

Acknowledgements

The guidance was developed with the research, thinking and development activities of the individuals participating in the LD Guidelines Committee. We are very grateful to the Wayne County Committee for Specific Learning Disabilities for permitting us to reproduce their excellent work. A large majority of the content in this guidance document was taken directly from the Guidance for the Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities which can be accessed through the Wayne Resa website: www.resa.net.

LCISD Learning Disabilities Committee:

Name	Position	District
Dr. Shirley Harris	School Psychologist	LCISD/North Branch
Melissa Hill	School Psychologist	Lapeer Community Schools
Gregory Piontkowski	School Psychologist	Lapeer Community Schools
Mindy Pellegata	School Psychologist	CEC (Almont, Dryden, Imlay City)

Thank you For Your Contributions:

Name	Position	District
Teri Johnson	Special Education Director	LCISD
Marianne Fleet	Educational Accountability Specialist	LCISD

Committee Chair

Name	Position	District
Michelle Proulx	Coordinator of Special Education	CEC

Ex-officio

Joseph. H Keena	Superintendent	LCISD

Guidance for the Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities

Lapeer County Intermediate School District
Learning Disabilities Guidelines Committee
2010

Lapeer County Intermediate School District
1996 W. Oregon St.
Lapeer, MI 48446
(810) 664-5917
www.lcisd.k12.mi.us

Table of Contents

Section 1

The Laws
and
Changes in
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
Identification

"Childhood is a time for learning. A child who delays breaking the phonetic code will miss much of the reading practice that is essential to building fluency and vocabulary; as a consequence, he will fall further and further behind in acquiring comprehension skills and knowledge of the world around him. To see this happen to a child is sad, all the more because it is preventable."

-Sally Shaywitz, M.D.
Overcoming Dyslexia

1.1 The Laws

The laws and rules regarding the identification of students with specific learning disabilities have changed. The IDEA of 2004 created new options for the identification of students with specific learning disabilities. The most current definitions of Learning Disabilities follow:

Federal Definition of Specific Learning Disabilities

§ 300.309 Determining the existence of a specific learning disability.

(a) The group described in § 300.306 may determine that a child has a specific learning disability, as defined in § 300.8(c)(10), if—

(1) The child does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or State-approved grade-level standards:

(i) Oral expression.
(ii) Listening comprehension.
(iii) Written expression.
(iv) Basic reading skill.
(v) Reading fluency skills.
(vi) Reading comprehension.
(vii) Mathematics calculation.
(viii) Mathematics problem solving.

(2)(i) The child does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section when using a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; or

(ii) The child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments, consistent with §§ 300.304 and §§ 300.305; and

(3) The group determines that its findings under paragraphs (a) (1) and (2) of this section are not primarily the result of—

(i) A visual, hearing, or motor disability;
(ii) Mental retardation;
(iii) Emotional disturbance;
(iv) Cultural factors;
(v) Environmental or economic disadvantage; or
(vi) Limited English proficiency.

(b) To ensure that underachievement in a child suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group must consider, as part of the evaluation described in §§ 300.304 through § 300.306—

(1) Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child

was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and

(2) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child's parents.

The public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services, and must adhere to the timeframes described in §§ 300.301 and § 300.303, unless extended by mutual written agreement of the child's parents and a group of qualified professionals, as described in § 300.306(a)(1)—

(1) If, prior to a referral, a child has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided instruction, as described in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section; and

(2) Whenever a child is referred for an evaluation.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e–3; 1401(30); 1414(b)(6))

Michigan Administrative Rules and Clarification Memo

The state of Michigan revised the administrative rules regarding the definition of Specific Learning Disabilities in August, 2008. The rules were followed by a clarification memo:

MEMORANDUM

January 22, 2009

TO: Intermediate School District Directors of Special Education
FROM: Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Ph.D. Director
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services
SUBJECT: Specific Learning Disabilities – Clarification

DISSEMINATE TO LEAs AND PSAs

Michigan's Administrative Rule 340.1713, Specific Learning Disability Defined, Determination, was amended on September 11, 2008 (enclosed). A few components of the rule warrant clarification.

The Role of Severe Discrepancy

Rule 340.1713 of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (Rules) allows the use of three options for determining specific learning disability (SLD) eligibility. The rule allows a district to use severe discrepancy, but only as one part of a full and individual evaluation.

Severe discrepancy may never be used alone to determine a student eligible as a student with SLD.

Response to Scientific, Research-based Intervention Process

In determining eligibility under SLD, one of the options a school district may use is a process that is based on a student's response to scientific, research-based intervention. Depending on the local district's practice, this process may have a variety of names; e.g., Instructional Consultation Team, Response to Intervention, Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) does not mandate any specific scientific, research-based intervention process.

A pattern of strengths and weaknesses is not the same as severe discrepancy.

At § 300.309(a)(2)(ii), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations identify a pattern of strengths and weaknesses as an option in determining SLD eligibility. The Rules permit local districts to use this option. The MDE does **not** mandate any specific process to determine a pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Any determination of SLD requires a comprehensive evaluation according to the evaluation procedures in the federal regulations at § 300.301 – § 300.311, including those particular to a student suspected of having a SLD in § 300.307 – § 300.311.

Michigan Definition of Specific Learning Disabilities

R 340.1713 Specific learning disability defined; determination.
Rule 13. (1) "Specific learning disability" means a disorder in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of cognitive impairment, of emotional impairment, of autism spectrum disorder, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
(2) In determining whether a student has a learning disability, the state shall:
(a) Not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement.
(b) Permit the use of a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention.
(c) Permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures.
(3) A determination of learning disability shall be based upon a comprehensive evaluation by a multidisciplinary evaluation team, which shall include at least both of the following:
(a) The student's general education teacher or, if the student does not have a general education teacher, a general education teacher qualified to teach a student of his or her age or, for a student of less than school age, an individual qualified by the state educational agency to teach a student of his or her age.
(b) At least 1 person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of students, such as a school psychologist, an authorized provider of speech and language under R 340.1745(d), or a teacher consultant.

1.2 Changes in Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Identification

Subsequent to revisions in the Federal definition of Specific Learning Disability, the Michigan Department of Education amended Michigan's Administrative Rule 340.1713, Specific Learning Disability Defined Determination on September 11, 2008. As stated in a clarification memo dated January 22, 2009, the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS) allows "the use of three options for determining specific learning disability (SLD) eligibility. The rule allows a district to use severe discrepancy, but only as one part of a full and individual evaluation. Severe discrepancy may never be used **alone** to determine a student eligible as a student with a SLD". A second option in determining SLD eligibility includes "the option (that) a school district may use a process that is based on a student's response to scientific, research-based intervention." The MDE does **not** mandate any specific scientific, research-based intervention process. The memo also includes a description of a third option, which is to identify a "pattern of strengths and weaknesses in determining SLD eligibility". The Rules permit local districts to use this option. However, the MDE does **not** mandate any specific process to determine a pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, this memo asserts "any determination of SLD requires a full comprehensive evaluation according to the evaluation procedures in the federal regulations at § 300.301 – § 300.311".

Listed below are four issues with the use of "severe discrepancy models" that have led to new comprehensive and research based approaches to learning disability identification.

Issue #1: Discrepancy models fail to differentiate between children who have specific learning disability and those who have academic achievement problems related to poor instruction, lack of experience, or other confounding factors. For a thorough discussion of this important issue, see Fletcher et al., (2007).

Issue #2: The application of discrepancy models has been shown to discriminate against certain groups of students: students outside of "mainstream" culture and students who are in the upper and lower ranges of IQ. Due to psychometric problems, discrepancy approaches tend to under-identify children at the lower end of the IQ range and over-identify children in the upper end. This problem has been addressed by various formulas that correct for the regression to the mean that occurs when two correlated measures are used. However, using regression formulas does not address issues such as potential language and cultural bias in IQ tests, nor does it improve the classification function of a discrepancy model (Stuebing et al., 2002).

Issue #3: Discrepancy models do not effectively predict which students will benefit from or respond differentially to instruction. The research around this issue has examined both progress and absolute outcomes for children with and without discrepancy, and has not supported the notion the two groups will respond differentially to instruction (Stanovich, 2005). Poor readers with discrepancies and poor readers without discrepancies perform similarly on skills considered to be important to the development of reading skills (Gresham, 2001).

Issue #4: The use of discrepancy models requires children to fail for a substantial period of time – usually years – before they are far enough behind to exhibit a discrepancy. In order for

children to exhibit a discrepancy, two tests need to be administered – an IQ test, such as the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, and an achievement test. Because of limitations of achievement and IQ testing, discrepancies often do not "appear" until late second, third, or even fourth grade.

The severe discrepancy approach to identifying learning disability was fraught with methodological problems that were considered to be problematic for parents and practitioners – so problematic, that by the late 1990's, the discrepancy approach was referred to as the "wait and fail" approach by federal officials (Lyon, 2002).

Considering these issues, and the movement towards implementing Response to Intervention procedures as an effort to insure high quality instruction delivered with fidelity, we are aware that critical markers have been identified as robust indicators of academic performance. Researchers have identified measures of phonological awareness and early literacy knowledge such as letter sound relationships as powerful early indicators of later reading performance. In addition, fluent reading of connected text is also highly correlated with growth in both word reading and comprehension. It also represents a meaningful way to screen and progress monitor in reading (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1998). Use of this approach provides a method of screening to identify students with potentially persistent academic problems, and assessing them further.

After review of guidance documents from within Michigan and beyond, research on Response to Intervention, and review of validity research on models of specific learning disability, the committee established the following principles to guide the recommendations of this work.

Reasons Not Sufficient to Identify a Learning Disability

There are necessary and sufficient conditions for the identification of a learning disability. Listed below are conditions that may be regarded as necessary, but, in isolation are not sufficient to identify a student as a person with a disability.

- Less than average intellectual ability is not sufficient reason or evidence to identify a student as learning disabled.
- Slow rate of learning/progress toward State standards and/or academic achievement below age expectancy is not sufficient evidence for the identification of a student as learning disabled.
- Low academic achievement is not a sufficient reason to identify a student as learning disabled.
- Psychometric documentation of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses is not sufficient evidence to identify a student as learning disabled without comprehensive evidence of the impact of the weaknesses in daily and classroom functioning.

Documentation/Measurement Requirements

No one method of data collection or testing is sufficient basis for the identification of a learning disability. Assessment data must be validated with anecdotal records, history, classroom performance measures, records/documentation of access and response to quality instruction, and psychometric measures of cognitive strengths and weaknesses.

Documentation of appropriate instruction in reading and math and student progress within instruction must be provided for every student. It is expected that every school has procedures in which students are provided with supplemental instruction to remediate performance below age or State standards. The school has a fundamental responsibility to provide quality research based instruction to all students. The Response to Intervention model is a data-driven methodology for closing achievement gaps using direct measurement of specific skills before and during research-based supplemental instruction. Whether called "Response to Intervention" or other intervention process, a quality instructional program applies the principles of instructional intervention/supplement and maintains a system to record/document both the data on student progress and the type, nature, and fidelity of delivery of the supplemental instruction.

Response to Intervention, in combination with an analysis of Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses, is important in differentiating learning disability subtypes, identifying instructional strategies, and calibrating decisions across districts.

Unifying Construct of Learning Skills

As we abandon the severe discrepancy model and embrace new approaches to specific learning disability identification, the committee sought a model of learning ability that would clarify understanding of the specific learning disability for parents and teachers. Specific learning disabilities do follow a developmental course and there are struggles for the individual student that must be addressed in instruction. One of the biggest challenges to identifying specific learning disability with any consistency is the absence of a unifying construct that is research-based and valid. Based on extensive review of validity evidence of cognitive and learning constructs, the committee is recommending the use of the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory. The CHC theory is measurable, norm referenced, validated and there are more than 25 years of educational research and data sets from over half a million administrations on the educational implications of the construct. It is essential for multi-disciplinary teams to learn the same constructs of learning abilities to inform instructional practices. For example, we know the impact of auditory discrimination skills and phonological awareness on basic reading and this information has informed schools to develop instructional interventions to directly address those deficits. We believe we will build a common understanding of learning abilities that are research-based, valid and measurable by appending the Pattern of Strength and Weakness analysis to the CHC construct of learning.

Challenges in Changing Criteria for Specific Learning Disability

The change in criteria for the identification of specific learning disability will present challenges to professionals, parents, teachers, and administrators in developing new understandings of the criteria while striving to best meet the needs of students.

The severe discrepancy definition of specific learning disability is no longer appropriate. The practice will be immediately discontinued with initial evaluations.

There will be pressure from outside influences to continue to apply past criteria or to accept clinical definitions of disability that are not relevant to schools. There will also be situations in which students were identified for services under the previous guidance and they are now due for a re-evaluation. The following guidance is offered to address these situations.

Guidance for Addressing Recommendations from Outside Reports

When presented with reports from outside agencies that pose a diagnosis of a specific learning disability, there are steps the team may consider to ensure that decisions of the school are consistent with legal requirements and educationally relevant. There may be situations in which the recommendations from outside reports may be clinically meaningful but not relevant to schools. Definitions of specific learning disability in clinical settings are in accordance with diagnostic criteria that adhere to medical models. Schools must adhere to definitions of learning disability from Federal and State rules. Educational criteria of disability require extensive documentation of classroom performance. It is entirely possible for an individual to have characteristics of a handicapping condition but not be eligible for special education because the student is able to benefit from instruction in general education without special education services, supports, modifications or programs.

Teams must consider the information and recommendations from the outside report. This does not mean that the team must accept all recommendations as directions for their actions. The team has the responsibility to review the information relative to State and Federal rules, County guidelines, local district procedures, and within the context of the multiple information sources that are integral to the determination of a specific learning disability. The team may take the following steps to address recommendations from outside agencies.

- Begin with a Review of Existing Education Data (REED).
- Review the information in the report.
- Seek information from existing school records and current classroom performance data.
- Review student progress toward State standards using state and local assessments. Obtain a report from the teacher on student performance.
- Request input from the parent.
- Determine additional evaluation components the team will need in order to complete the comprehensive assessment of the student.
- Conduct at least one classroom observation by a member of the team.
- Locate or collect available repeated measures of student performance with results provided to parents.
- Apply County LD Guidelines and local procedures to the analysis of all information. Answer the question, “Is the student able to benefit from instruction without special education?”
- The multi-disciplinary team will then offer the appropriate recommendation as to whether or not the student is eligible for special education.
- The IEP team will determine the eligibility and the IEP team will determine the goals, modifications, supports, services, and programs that are most appropriate to meeting the needs of the student.

Guidance for Applying New Criteria in Reevaluations

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), reevaluation teams must systematically review the appropriateness of the special education eligibility.

Steps:
Districts will use the Review of Existing Education Data (REED) format to determine the need to conduct a comprehensive re-evaluation.

- A reevaluation may not be necessary if the student is demonstrating slow progress and continues to require support from special education. This should be documented on the REED.

- If a parent or team member is requesting evaluation to consider a change in eligibility, a reevaluation consisting of a comprehensive evaluation should be conducted.

- A redetermination IEP must be held within three (3) years of the initial or last redetermination IEP meeting, but more often if conditions warrant (i.e., at the request of the student's parent or teacher).

The team must work from the premise of "First, do no harm".

The team must always consider the student's ability to benefit from instruction without special education services in making re determination decisions.

Application of Previous Criteria: The team will need to review the criteria under which the student was initially identified as a student with a specific learning disability. If, when the criteria are applied relative to present student performance, it appears to be most beneficial to the student to continue to apply the previous criteria, then the recommendation of the team must be to apply the previous criteria.

Application of New Criteria: If, the application of the new criteria, in combination with current performance data seems to provide a more relevant and appropriate schema for defining the student's ability to benefit from instruction and the student will not lose the benefits of a free appropriate public education by the change in criteria, then the team may choose to apply the new criteria.

Section 2

Process Model of Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Determination

The purpose of the evaluation is to surround the student of concern with the best and most comprehensive information possible to make valid and appropriate recommendations as to the student's eligibility for special education and, more importantly, educationally relevant recommendations for instruction.

-Wayne County SLD Committee 2009

2.1 Process Model of Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Determination

The Lapeer County Intermediate School District model for the identification of Specific Learning Disability emphasizes the full and individual evaluation as a process of data collection that includes multiple methods of assessing student performance with input from parents, teachers, instructional specialists, and school psychologists. The purpose of the evaluation is to surround the student of concern with the best and most comprehensive information possible to make valid and appropriate recommendations as to the student's eligibility for special education and, more importantly, educationally relevant recommendations for instructional strategies, supports and services.

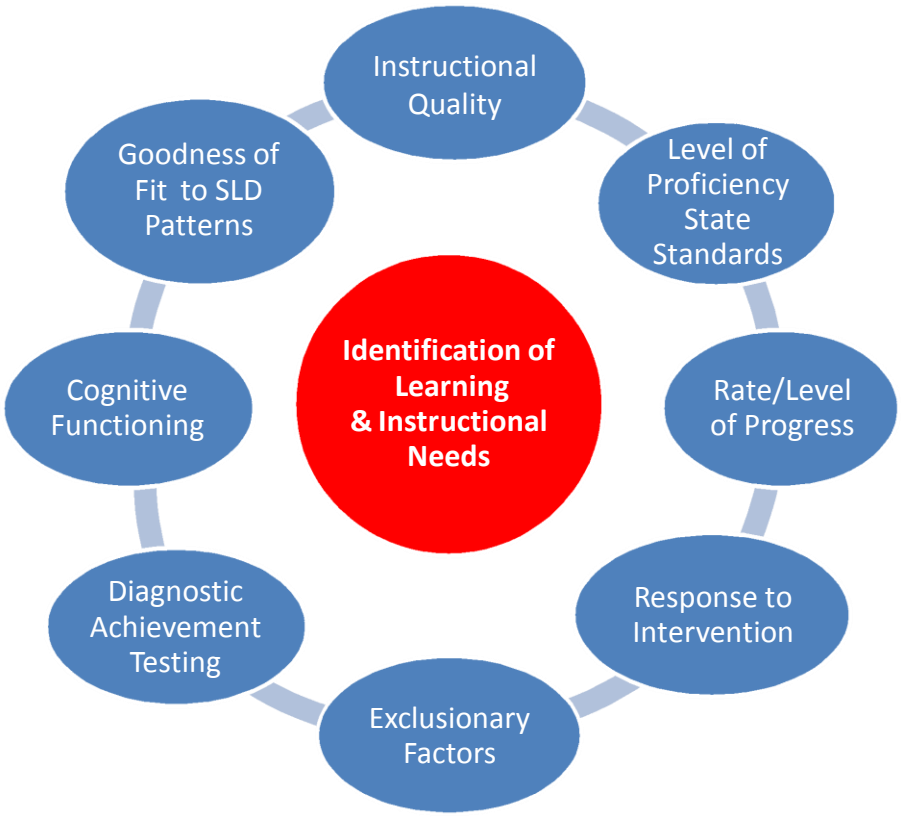


Figure 1. Process model of specific learning disability eligibility.

Begin with Considerations of Instructional Quality: Federal law requires schools to ensure that students were provided with appropriate, evidence-based instruction that is delivered by a qualified teacher. The model begins with considerations as to the provision of quality instruction delivered by qualified teachers.

Level of Proficiency State Standards: Student progress with State standards is a fundamental consideration for instructional planning and for understanding student educational performance levels. Next, the team considers the student's level of proficiency with State standards, as measured by state assessments and/or district benchmarking assessments.

Rate/Level of Progress: Data representing repeated measures of student performance provided to parents at regular intervals are required to determine the probability of a specific learning disability. Repeated measures of student rate/level of progress may include progress monitoring data, benchmark assessments, classroom assessments, or progress reports that occur in a minimum of 4 – 6 week intervals.

Response to Intervention: Academic interventions, whether formalized in school procedures or through teacher efforts to provide supplementary instruction, must be documented with attention to the fidelity of the efforts to impact student achievement.

Exclusionary Factors: Before identifying attributions of disability within the student, the team must consider all other factors that could explain the performance patterns and the lack of student response to instruction. The team must consider the student's progress in the context of his/her opportunity, past experiences, sensory, health, language, culture, and developmental challenges.

Diagnostic Achievement Testing: The full and individual evaluation of the student must include normative measures to advance the understanding of why the student continues to have difficulty. The student must also be tested with an individually administered standardized achievement test to validate the samples of classroom assessment data with normative data.

Cognitive Testing: Before applying a categorical label to a student, the study of abilities must include testing of intelligence skills to identify patterns of strength and weakness that may further elucidate understanding of the student's learning difficulties.

Goodness of Fit to Specific Learning Disability Patterns: The test data are then analyzed relative to research-based clinical profiles of learning disability to determine a goodness of fit with existing models of learning disability. The team considers the relationships between areas of strength and area of deficit as they relate to our most current understanding of specific learning disability.

Lead Back to Quality Instructional Practice: The assessment must then lead to the development of educationally relevant recommendations for the student, whether determined eligible as a student with a specific learning disability or not. The evaluation must lead to appropriate recommendations as to the best plan for instruction. Recommendations should not be limited to special education supports and programs but may include such recommendations as classroom accommodations or continued participation in Response to Intervention targeted small group instruction.

Section 3

Quality Instruction

You can either fight assessment or embrace it. However, you cannot be a high-performance school without embracing assessment.

-Dave Montague, Principal
Washington Elementary
Kennewick, WA

3.1 Quality Instruction

One of the unique features to the new definition of learning disability is the requirement for teams to ensure that the underachievement is not due to a lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math. To meet this assurance, the team must consider:

> (1) Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in general education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and
> (2) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child's parents.

Appropriate Instruction in General Education Settings Delivered by Qualified Personnel

Research has shown that the majority of students can successfully learn in the general education classroom environment when the curriculum is delivered through high quality, scientific, research-based instruction. Combining core instruction with effective interventions is key to achieving student success.

All students are engaged in challenging and purposeful learning through the *general education curriculum.* In Michigan, the Michigan Curriculum Framework articulates a vision for all students by describing the knowledge and abilities needed to be successful in today's society.

Michigan's vision for K-12 education states:

> *Michigan's K-12 education will ensure that all students will develop their potential in order to lead productive and satisfying lives. All students will engage in challenging and purposeful learning that blends their experiences with content knowledge and real-world applications in preparation for their adult roles, which include becoming:*
>
> - *Literate individuals*
> - *Healthy and fit people*
> - *Responsible family members*
> - *Productive workers*
> - *Involved citizens*
> - *Self-directed, lifelong learners*

The Michigan Curriculum Framework is organized into standards and benchmarks. Each school district adopts a local curriculum that is aligned to the Michigan Curriculum Framework.

Curriculum refers to <u>what</u> is *taught.* It is the content that teachers teach and what students are expected to learn. This domain includes content arrangement and pace of steps leading to the

stated outcomes of study. The skills and information that are the content focus are assessed and measured.

Before instruction can be aligned with student needs, an appropriate curriculum that has been carefully selected should be in place. To assure curriculum alignment, the school or school district needs to:

- Make sure that the curriculum is aligned and matches appropriate state and district standards and benchmarks.
- Be certain that core components are introduced and reinforced at appropriate levels within the curriculum.
- See that the curriculum is taught consistently in all of the classrooms.

Instruction is <u>how</u> curriculum is taught. Instruction includes the science and the art of teaching. Effective instructional practices focus on teaching skills in a specific order and within specific time periods. Using research-based methodologies is the science of teaching. Finding ways to motivate and engage students in active, purposeful learning is the art of teaching. This domain includes the selection and use of materials that enables both the science and the art of teaching to occur.

Assessment is essential to determine if students have acquired the content knowledge and achieved the stated outcome. The data from ongoing assessments drive instructional practices.

Instruction should be examined for effectiveness starting with the whole group. Some guiding questions are:

- Have the research-based practices been shown to increase student performance?
- Have effective practices been implemented with fidelity in ways that students will benefit?
- Do materials have documented efficacy?
- Has a sufficient amount of instructional time been allotted for curriculum implementation?
- Is instruction tailored to meet students' current levels of knowledge?
- Is instruction organized so that pre-requisite skills are taught sequentially?

There is only one curriculum-the general education curriculum. All students, including students with special needs, will access the general education curriculum with varying degrees of support within the Response to Intervention framework.

The term “qualified personnel’ refers to the definition of “highly qualified personnel” from the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2001. The teacher is college educated, certified by the state of Michigan, and has demonstrated competencies in the core content areas of instruction.

Data should be included documenting that the student was provided with appropriate instruction in general education settings. Instruction was delivered by qualified personnel meeting effectiveness guidelines as documented in school improvement planning and the district model for the implementation of Response to Intervention.

Documentation of Repeated Assessments of Achievement at Reasonable Intervals

Data-based documentation of repeated assessments may include Response to Intervention progress monitoring results, in-class tests based on state standards, benchmark assessment, criterion-referenced measures or other regularly administered assessments.

Data from repeated assessments used in the eligibility process should typically have been administered at evenly-spaced intervals over a reasonable period of time. A reasonable period of time may typically fall within a 9 to 12 week period. Schools are not limited to such a time frame and should follow the requirements of the particular instruction program or assessment process in use by the district.

Classroom Assessments and Progress Monitoring Data

Student data is crucial in order to:

- Make accurate decisions about the effectiveness of general and remedial education instruction and interventions;
- Undertake early identification/intervention with academic and behavioral problems;
- Prevent unnecessary and excessive identification of students with disabilities;
- Make decisions about eligibility for special programs, including special education services;
- Determine individual education programs and deliver and evaluate special education services. (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2008)

Universal Screening Assessments can be given to all students in the fall, winter, and spring. The purpose of the screening is to identify students who might be at risk for academic failure. Local school norms are how a specific school performs on the universal screening data. Schools should look at their local norms in relation to the district and state or national norms and then determine a rate of increase.

Diagnostic Assessments can be administered to those students found at-risk to further identify the specific areas of weakness.

Progress Monitoring is a scientifically based practice that is used to assess student's academic and/or behavior performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.

To implement progress monitoring, the student's current levels of performance are determined and goals are identified for learning that will take place over time. The student's academic performance is measured on a regular basis (weekly or monthly, depending on the tier of intervention). Progress toward meeting the student's goals are measured by comparing expected and actual rates of learning. Based on these measurements, teaching is adjusted as needed. Thus, the student's progression of achievement is monitored and instructional techniques are adjusted to meet the individual student's learning needs.

When implementing progress monitoring on a school level, it is important that teachers understand the purpose. The purpose of progress monitoring is not to gather more data, but to gather data to make instructional decisions.

Progress monitoring can be implemented with an individual student or an entire class. Progress monitoring data should be more specific and administered more often as students are assigned to more specialized instructional interventions.

In new conceptions of learning disability identification practices, data are collected over time to sample student rate of learning and performance relative to peers. Learning patterns, as revealed in these multiple assessments inform the group as to the student's response to instruction.

Evaluation practices move from being an event to a process for improving the context of learning for the individual student.

The following figure shows how interventions for students may vary based on student performance at different points in time. Student placement into and out of the tiers of intervention should be fluid and responsive to the data probes.

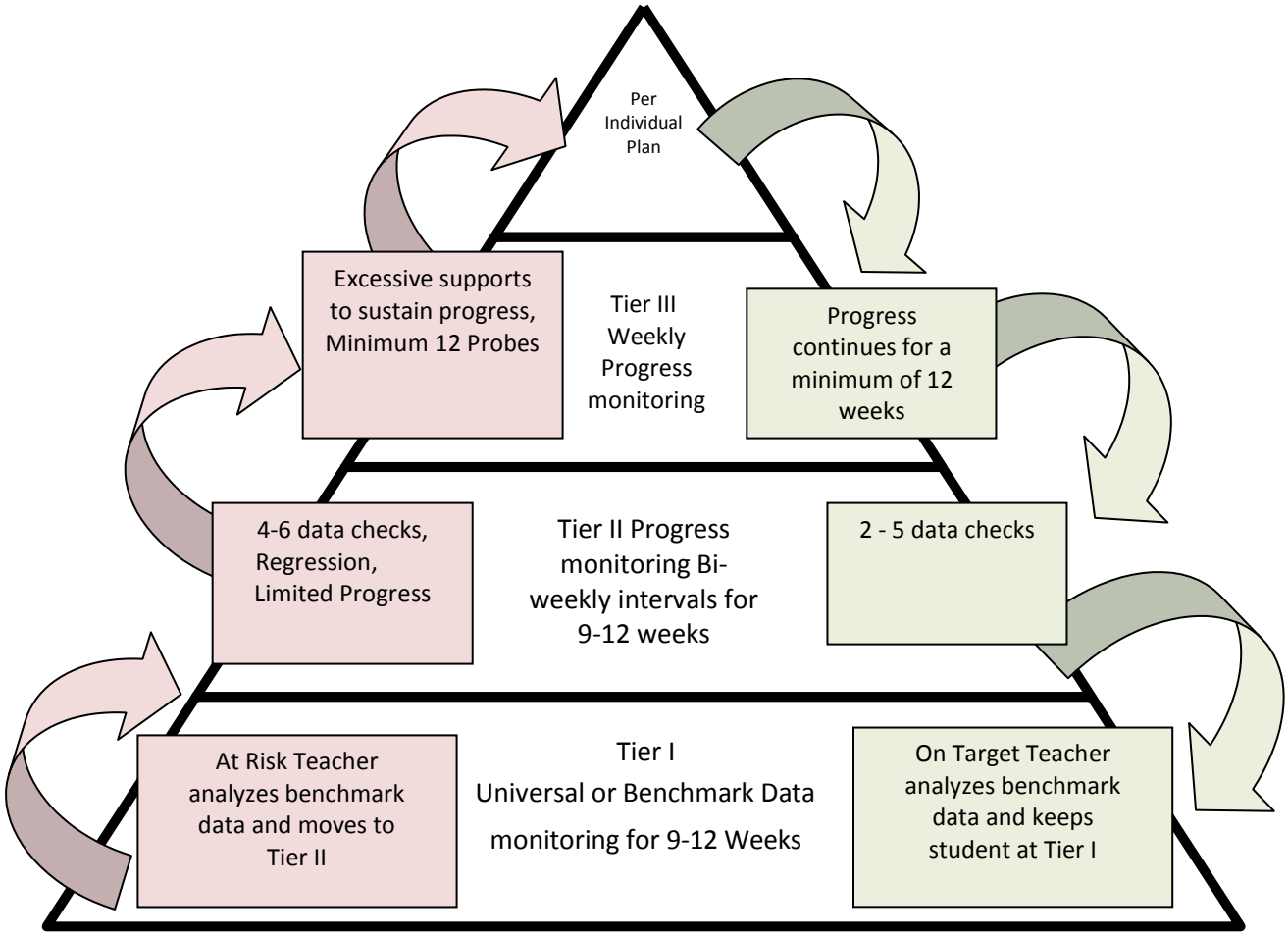


Figure 2. Using data to make intervention decisions for students.

A well-designed Response to Intervention (RtI) framework provides a continuum of academic and behavioral supports for all students. Appropriate instruction/ interventions are matched to a student's needs. The level of service is adjusted as a student's needs change. The movement between tiers is fluid and flexible. A student should not remain at one tier for an indefinite period of time. Parents are informed about their child's progress, and decisions to have the student move or remain at a tier are based on the student's performance data.

The sample forms may be used to summarize and report student performance data in accordance with requirements to review student progress relative to age/state standards, to monitor progress, and to collect repeated measures of performance that are provided to parents at reasonable intervals.

Report of Repeated Measures of Student Progress
DISTRICT

Student: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Assessments Used:

Reading Skill	Target Score/Level			Student Score			Other Progress Checks											
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Oral Language																		
Phonemic Awareness																		
Phonics																		
Fluency																		
Comprehension																		
Vocabulary																		
Writing																		

Assessments Used:

Math Skill	Target Score/Level			Student Score			Other Progress Checks											
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number Concepts																		
Number Facts																		
Time																		
Geometry																		
Money																		

Assessments Used:

Writing Skill	Target Score/Level			Student Score			Other Progress Checks											
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Organization																		
Vocabulary																		
Details																		
Ideas																		
Grammar																		

Comments and Suggestions:

☐ I would like to learn more about my child's progress and what we may do to help him/her in school.

☐ I received this information about my child's progress in school.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Progress Monitoring Profile

School: _____ **Teacher:** _____ **Room:** _____ **Grade:** _____ **Year:** _____

Student Name: _____ **I.D.#** _____ **D.O.B.** _____ **Age:** _____

Assessment	Date/Score	Date/Score	Date/Score	COMMENTS / Other Test Information

LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENTS

WEAK AREA(S)	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Status Met or Not Met	Comment(s) / Measurement Used
Oral Language														
Phonemic Awareness														
Phonics														
Fluency														
Comprehension														
Vocabulary														
Writing														

MATH ASSESSMENTS

WEAK AREA(S)	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Status Met or Not Met	Comment(s) / Measurement Used
Number Concepts														
Number Facts														
Time														
Geometry														
Money														
Other														

Review of Performance on Michigan State Standards

Date: _____ Student: _____ School: _____ Grade: _____

Directions: Summarize State Assessment Data. Check or circle all that apply and answer the questions.				
	Reading	**Writing**	**ELA**	**Math**
Assessment	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations
Proficiency Level **Year:** **Grade:**	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4
Assessment	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations	MEAP MEAP-Access MI Access MME Accommodations
Proficiency Level **Year:** **Grade:**	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4	Circle: 1 2 3 4
Progress	Significant Improvement Improvement No Change Decline Significant Decline	Significant Improvement Improvement No Change Decline Significant Decline	Significant Improvement Improvement No Change Decline Significant Decline	Significant Improvement Improvement No Change Decline Significant Decline
Does the student meet State Standards?				

Yes The team has determined that the student was provided instruction appropriate for the grade level standards.

If no, explain:

Review of Performance on Michigan Age Standards Using the Battelle Developmental Inventory

Date: _____ Student: _____ School: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Directions: Summarize assessment data based on the Battelle Developmental Inventory. Fill in the correct information and review the questions below.

DOMAIN	Adaptive		Personal Social		Communication		Motor		Cognitive	
	SubDomain	Score	SubDomain	Score	SubDomain	Score	SubDomain	Score	SubDomain	Score
Sub-Domain	Self-Care		Adult Interaction		Receptive Communication		Gross Motor		Attention and Memory	
	Personal Responsibility		Peer Interaction		Expressive Communication		Fine Motor		Reasoning and Academic Skills	
			Self-Concept and Social Role				Perceptual Motor		Perception and Concepts	
Total	Score: Percentile: Age:									
Notes:										

Ages: Birth through 7 years, 11 months. The Battelle Developmental Inventory was selected by the State of Michigan for use in evaluating young children.

Yes The team has determined that the student was provided instruction appropriate for the developmental age standards.

If No, explain:

**Note: Schools may choose to use other State approved measures for young children, such as the Brigance, Carolina, AEP Test, Creative Curriculum Development Checklist, or LAP-3.*

Section 4

Response to Intervention (RtI)

…a school may use a process to determine if a child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as part of the evaluation procedures…

-IDEA 2004

4.1 Response to Intervention (RtI)

Michigan's Rule on Response to Scientific, Research-based Intervention Process
In determining eligibility under Specific Learning Disability (SLD), one of the options a school district may use is a process that is based on a student's response to scientific, research-based intervention. Depending on the local district's practice, this process may have a variety of names; e.g., Instructional Consultation Team, Response to Intervention, Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative, etc. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) does not mandate any specific scientific, research-based intervention process. Michigan's Administrative Rule 340.1713, Specific Learning Disability Defined, Determination, was amended on September 11, 2008.

The Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework

The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD, 2006) defines Response to Intervention (RtI) as:

> *"…an assessment and intervention process for systematically monitoring student progress and making decisions about the need for instructional modifications or increasingly intensified services using progress monitoring data."*

RtI is an **instructional framework** that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, special, gifted and remedial education in providing high-quality, standards based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. This framework focuses on continuous improvement by using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions.

RtI serves two primary purposes. The first purpose is to improve the educational outcome for each and every child through a multi-tiered, data driven process that utilizes a structured problem-solving method. The second purpose is to establish a process to assist in the identification of students with a specific learning disability. For RtI to be successful, both processes need to be implemented with fidelity.

Implementing an RtI framework provides a continuum of school-wide support. Its fundamental principles are that core instruction is provided with fidelity, student progress is monitored frequently, students' responsiveness to intervention is evaluated, and instruction is adapted as needed (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2008).

Since student populations and needs vary, it is expected that no two school districts or even school buildings will have a local implementation plan within the tiers that looks precisely the same. This continuum of school-wide support allows each school to organize instructional

delivery, optimize resources, and use a systematic approach to provide appropriate academic and behavioral supports.

The majority of students, 80-90%, will be successful with a Tier I core, standards based learning environment that provides scientific, research-based instruction. Approximately 10-15% of students will require a Tier II strategic, needs-based learning environment where scientific, research-based interventions are provided *in addition* to the core instruction. Approximately 5-10% of students will require a Tier III intensive, needs-based learning environment where scientific, research-based interventions are provided *in addition* to the core instruction. At Tier IV, 1-5% of students, who require a full and individual evaluation for special education or a Section 504 plan will need a learning environment that provides them with specialized interventions *in addition* to the core instruction.

RtI is <u>not</u> a student placement model, a location, a classroom, a class/course or a teacher. It is an integrated service delivery approach for all students and should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education.

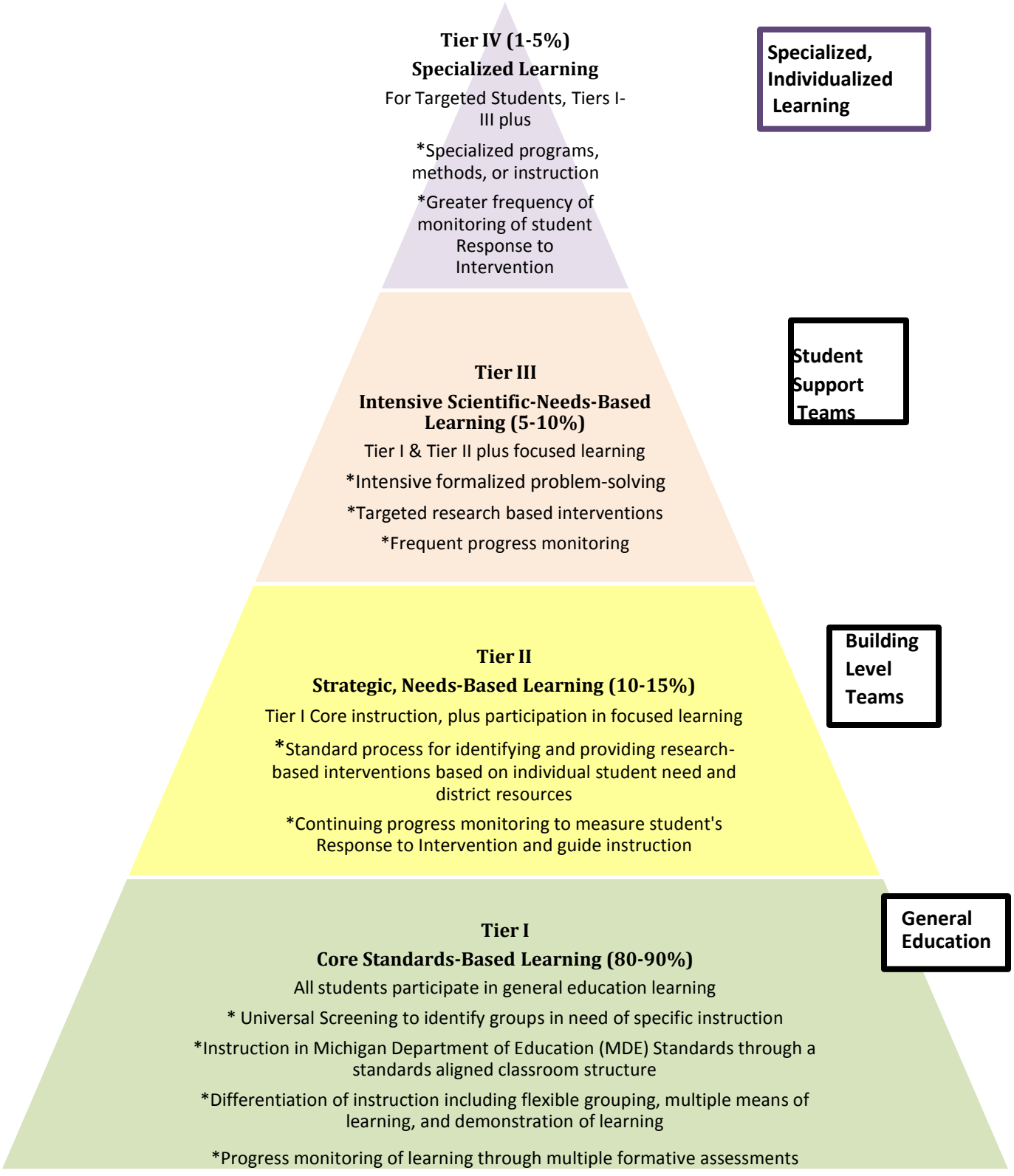


Figure 3. The four tier model of Response to Intervention.

Tier I: Core Standards-Based Learning

The focus of Tier I is the delivery of scientific, research-based core curriculum instruction and behavioral supports in general education to meet the needs of all students. Instructional decisions are based on data obtained from the following:

Table 1. Tier I Features and Implementation Considerations

Tier I Features	Considerations
Tier I Implementation and Monitoring Plan	▪ The school district develops its Tier I screening schedule and implementation plan, and then embeds it into the overall school/district improvement plan ▪ Universal benchmark screening should be scheduled 3 times a Year
Instruction & Universal Interventions	▪ Daily direct instruction of core for 60-90 minutes ▪ Universal interventions applied as necessary (+30 minutes) ▪ Explicit instruction to support social skills and behavior
Provider(s)	▪ Appropriately certified classroom teacher ▪ Universal interventions may also be provided by a supervised highly qualified support staff and/or specialist. This might include bilingual, Title I, or other staff as determined by the district/school
Group Size(s)	▪ Whole-group and small-group instruction ▪ Small groups may vary in size as determined by the provider and instructional needs
Frequency of Universal Interventions	▪ Determined by the school, grade level, or teacher ▪ When providing extra time over core, it is recommended that 4-5 sessions be held each week for a minimum of 30 minutes
Duration of Universal Interventions	▪ Core program is ongoing throughout the year ▪ Interventions in Tier I are fluid, determined by student response and last 9 – 12 weeks, or at reasonable intervals established by the district
Progress Monitoring Tools	▪ Universal benchmark screenings ▪ Yearly standards-based assessment ▪ Student work samples ▪ Curriculum-based measures ▪ Student behavior data

Tier I Features	Considerations
Frequency of Progress Monitoring	▪ Universal benchmark screening should take place 3-4 times each year ▪ Students who score at or below the 25th percentile on universal benchmark screening should be monitored at least monthly ▪ Students receiving universal interventions may need more frequent monitoring as determined by school ▪ Districts may establish local norms
Decision Rules: Determining Movement to More or Less Specialized Instruction	▪ The district decides what determines mastery, satisfactory growth, or the need for more intense intervention/remediation, regrouping students, and parent involvement ▪ It is recommended that requests for support for students who consistently score in the lowest 25th percentile on progress monitoring probes be made only after universal interventions are tried for a minimum of 9 - 12 weeks ▪ Requests for support for students with behavioral concerns are based on discipline data
Lack of Positive Response	▪ The general education teacher will use classroom data to determine if the student's lack of response to Tier I instruction and intervention warrants recommendation for Tier II supplementary interventions
Service Target	▪ Eighty percent (80%) of a school's students should be able to be served through Tier I ▪ If this is not the case, the core program and practices and/or behavioral systems need to be evaluated
Recommended Professional Development	▪ Differentiated instruction ▪ Classroom assessment ▪ Data analysis ▪ Data-based decision-making ▪ Delivery of scientifically based instructional practices ▪ Delivery of district's core program/instructional materials ▪ Student and classroom management ▪ Teaching and interventions for culturally different learners

Tier II – Strategic Level Needs-Based Learning

The focus of Tier II is to provide targeted interventions for students who are not achieving the desired standards through the core curriculum and who did not improve with Tier I instruction and universal interventions. A district may choose to use grade level teams or Student Support Teams to make Tier II recommendations. When using grade level teams, data are reviewed and the student is provided with direct supplemental instruction, typically in small group configurations. If using a Student Support Team (SST) at Tier II, the team functions to gather performance data about a student, hypothesize a possible cause for the problem, and design an Individualized Intervention Plan or Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), if necessary. Tier II provides for more frequent progress monitoring allowing instructional adjustments for the student of concern. Parents are informed.

Table 2. Tier II Features and Implementation Considerations

Tier II Features	Considerations
Implementation and Monitoring plan	▪ The school establishes its own Student Support Team (SST) as outlined in the school district's local implementation plan ▪ Building administrator assesses SST implementation and fidelity
Instruction & Interventions	▪ Possible re-teaching of core program/social skills ▪ Targeted interventions developed as a part of the student's documented Intervention Plan or Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)
Provider(s)	▪ Highly qualified classroom teacher and/or intervention specialists as documented in the Intervention Plan
Group Size	▪ Small group instruction in groups of 3 to 5
Frequency and Intensity of Interventions	▪ Determined by the written small group or individual plan ▪ Provided in addition to core instruction ▪ Instruction provided for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes 4-5 times each week
Duration of Intervention	▪ Interventions should be provided for 9-12 weeks or as established by local district policy ▪ Intervention cycles may be shortened or repeated as determined by the student's progress toward goals
Progress Monitoring Tools	▪ Student work samples ▪ Curriculum-based measures ▪ Probes of specific skills ▪ Student behavior data

Tier II Features	Considerations
Frequency of Progress Monitoring	▪ In addition to the short-cycle assessment schedule, the team determines more frequent progress monitoring. ▪ Bi-weekly monitoring is recommended.
Decision Rules	▪ Based on 4-9 data points administered bi-weekly ▪ Tier III if performance is <15th percentile or <75 benchmark or proficiency of peers ▪ Need for another cycle of interventions or adjusted interventions in Tier II based on data patterns ▪ Tier I if performance is >25th percentile or >75% benchmark proficiency and learning is reinforced
Upon Mastery	▪ Student may: ▪ Continue with the Intervention Plan or BIP, or ▪ Be exited and returned to Tier I instruction/programs when performance can be maintained with universal interventions
Lack of Positive Response	▪ The team may determine if student's lack of response to Tier II interventions warrants a need for Tier III intensive interventions ▪ Note: Under the IDEA, parents may ask the school to consider a request for an evaluation at any time and the request is not conditioned upon failure or having to advance through the Tiers
Service Target	▪ No more than 10-15% of a school's students can be effectively served at Tier II without compromising the school's delivery infrastructure ▪ High rates of students identified for Tier II interventions and/or retention recommendations suggest that the Tier I core program and practices need to be evaluated
Recommended Professional Development	▪ Data analysis ▪ Delivery of scientifically based interventions and instructional practices ▪ Delivery of district's core program/supplemental instructional materials ▪ Teaching and interventions for culturally different learners ▪ Student Support Team procedure ▪ Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) ▪ Behavioral interventions

Tier III – Intensive Needs-Based Learning

The focus of Tier III is to provide individualized intensive support to those students who are performing significantly below standards and who have not responded to quality interventions provided by Tiers I and II. Problem solving at this stage is more in depth and intensive and usually requires gathering and analyzing additional information about the student including his/her performance strengths and weaknesses and background information. Tier III is designed to accelerate a student's rate of learning by increasing the intensity of individualized interventions.

Table 3. Tier III Features and Implementation Considerations

Tier III Features	Considerations
Implementation and Monitoring Plan	▪ The student's intervention plan will be reviewed and revised by the Student Support Team (SST) ▪ Building administrator assesses SST implementation and fidelity
Instruction & Interventions	▪ Possible replacement or re-teaching of core program/social skills ▪ Intensive interventions provided as a part of the student's documented SST intervention plan or Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).
Provider(s)	▪ Highly qualified classroom teacher and/or intervention specialists as determined by the SST and documented in the SST plan
Group Size	▪ Individual instruction or in groups of 2 to 3 students
Frequency and Intensity of Interventions	▪ Determined by the written SST intervention plan ▪ Provided in addition to core instruction ▪ Instruction provided for a minimum of 2 thirty (30) minute sessions per day 4-5 days each week
Duration of Intervention	▪ Interventions should be provided for 9-12 weeks ▪ Intervention cycles may be shortened or repeated as determined by the SST and the student's progress toward goals
Progress Monitoring Tools	▪ Probes of specific skills ▪ Student work samples ▪ Curriculum-based measures ▪ Student behavior data ▪ Counts of student behaviors
Frequency of Progress Monitoring	Chart progress at a minimum of one time each week.

Tier III Features	Considerations
Decision Rules	▪ Based on 12 or more probes or data points ▪ Progress to Tier IV based on explicit criteria ▪ The need for another cycle of interventions based on patterns ▪ The need for a referral for a Section 504 determination or a Special Education evaluation based on probes combined with other information
Upon Mastery	▪ Provide interventions at appropriate Tier with a plan of monitoring and instruction ▪ The student is returned to Tier I instruction/programs when performance can be maintained with universal interventions
Lack of Positive Response	▪ SST may determine if student's lack of response to Tier III warrants a recommendation of a Review of Existing Education Data (REED) to consider possible special education evaluation ▪ Note: Under the IDEA, parents may ask the school to consider a request for an evaluation at any time and the request is not conditioned upon time in interventions
Service Target	▪ National models suggest that no more than 1-5% of the student population at a school need this level of support. ▪ If more than 5% of the school population is referred to Tier III, the district will need to revisit the core program and RtI procedures
Recommended Professional Development	Data analysis Delivery of scientifically based interventions and instructional practices Explicit instruction of specific skills Delivery of district's core program/instructional materials Teaching and interventions for culturally different learners SST procedure Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) Behavioral interventions

Tier IV – Specialized Learning

In addition to Tiers I through III, targeted students participate in:

Specialized programs, methodologies, or instructional deliveries.
Greater frequency of progress monitoring of student response to intervention(s).

Students identified for Tier IV interventions will be involved in targeted instruction. Progress monitoring and data collection will be deep, systematic, and formalized. Tier IV interventions are individualized and are based on student assessment data. Documentation of progress is comprehensive and robust.

Tier IV is developed for students who need additional supports and may meet eligibility criteria for program placement in Special Education. With three effective tiers in place prior to specialized services, most students who are struggling will be successful and will not require this degree of intervention. Tier IV does not represent a location for services. It is a layer of interventions that may be provided in the general education class or in a separate setting. For students with disabilities needing special education and related services, Tier IV provides instruction that is targeted and specialized to students' needs. If a student has already been determined as a child with a disability, the school system should not require additional documentation of prior interventions to determine that the student demonstrates additional delays. The special education instruction and documentation of progress in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) will constitute prior interventions and appropriate instruction. In some cases, the student may require a full and individual evaluation to determine eligibility in additional disability areas.

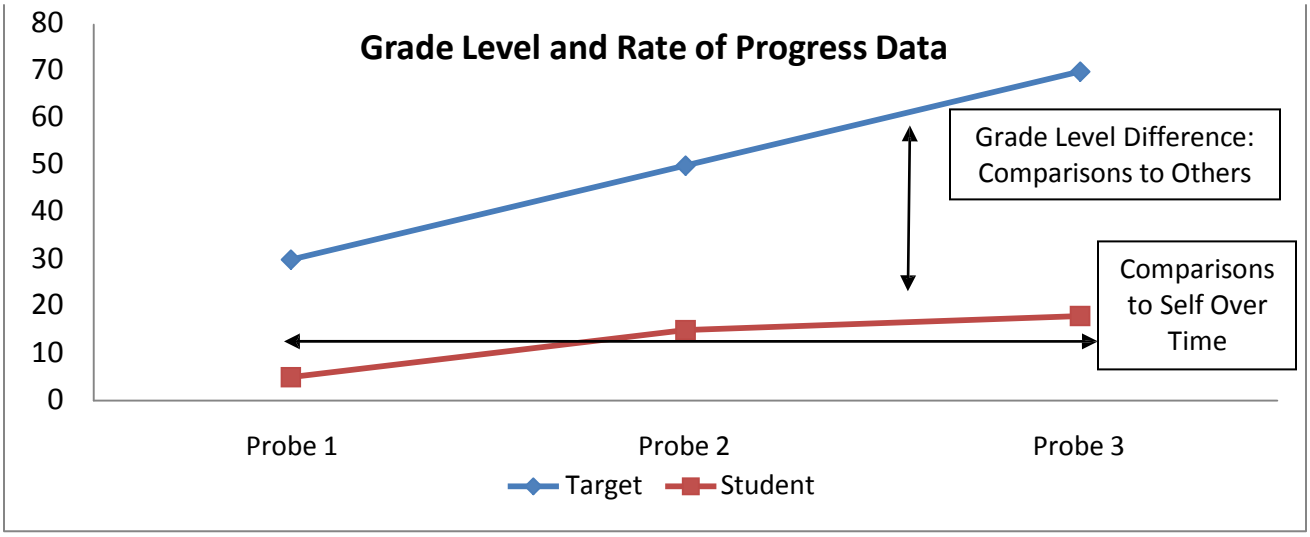
Special Education Eligibility

A local district opting to use the Response to Intervention option for the determination of Specific Learning Disability will need to establish clear local procedures and specifically define the assessments, interventions, and documentation requirements. The district must ensure that the procedures are consistently applied across students.

Criteria for Tier IV Placement Decisions

The decision to move to a Tier IV recommendation should be made by the Student Support Team and MET members. The team will review the intervention plans, progress data, other information about the student, and the documentation of the fidelity of the interventions. The team must also consider the extent of resources required to support the student in the general education curriculum. When reviewing the data accumulated from the Response to Intervention process, the team will need to apply consistent criteria before moving to an intensive intervention placement.

The following graph portrays the relationship of grade level expectation and rate of learning difference in establishing that a student may need a full and individual evaluation to identify a learning disability.



Listed below are criteria for determining that a student is suspected of having a learning disability in a Response to Intervention framework.

EXAMINE THE QUALITY OF THE CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT DATA

1. *Do the test items align to the pacing of the content in the grade level curriculum?*
2. *Is the difficulty of the test items aligned to classroom performance targets?*
3. *When using measures based on teacher judgment (i.e., rubrics, leveled readers, ratings) is the teacher scoring consistent with the scoring of another independent rater?*
4. *Did repeated measures include a minimum of 12 probes on specific skills?*

ESTABLISH AGE/GRADE LEVEL DIFFERENCE

When applying this standard to the analysis of student data, the team is looking at the student's level of performance in comparison to a target for the age or grade of the student. The target may be defined by expectations for peers or grade benchmark expectations.

Refer to data from state assessments and district benchmarks. Michigan uses Proficiency Levels on state assessments that are general and descriptive targets for grade level instruction. A student should not be identified for special education based solely on the Michigan state assessments.

When using classroom screening assessments that provide ranking or percentile data, scores at or below the 10th percentile generally indicate a substantial weakness in the skill relative to same age or same grade peers (e.g., DIBELS).

When using classroom assessments that apply benchmarks, guided reading levels, or proficiency performance levels, a learning deficit would be indicated when a student is performing at or below 50% of the grade/age standard. A concern or weakness is identified when a student is performing at or below 75% of the grade/age standard (e.g., DRA).

Woodcock-Johnson III/NU includes a norm-referenced standardized score that reflects age differences in the learning of specific skills. Consider using the Relative Proficiency Index (RPI) Score. A Relative Proficiency Index score at or below 67/90 is a strong indication of significant difficulty in the skill area.

A cautionary note: If a student has not had the opportunity to be exposed to grade level information, the "level difference" data may be reflecting the lack of exposure rather than a deficit within the student.

RATE OF LEARNING DIFFERENCE

The student's rate of learning is plotted over time but does not improve in the direction of targets or benchmarks when provided with high-quality interventions implemented over a significant period (e.g., CBM, progress monitoring, tiered support).

The frequency of data collection is a critical consideration when using Rate of Learning Difference data. Important considerations are:

Did the team make the necessary checks on performance on time?
Are the items of comparable difficulty over time?

Recommended progress monitoring frequency is a minimum of 12 weekly probes. If using a leveled or guided reading paradigm for determining rate of learning over time, there should be documented weekly skill probes.

ADVERSE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

Review of the individual student qualitative and quantitative data indicates the need for specially designed instruction. Refer to the full and individual evaluation data matrix to consider additional information criteria.

EXCLUSION FACTORS

Review of other factors, such as a significant disability in another area, or an absence of meaningful instructional opportunities that explain the learning patterns and instructional needs of the student. Refer to the full and individual comprehensive data matrix within this document to review considerations.

Consistent with leading authorities on RtI (Fletcher, et. al., 2007), the Lapeer County SLD Committee recommends a hybrid model that includes RtI plus normative testing.

Guidance for Timely Decisions in the Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework

According to Federal rules, the public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services, and must adhere to the timeframes described in §§ 300.301 and § 300.303, unless extended by mutual written agreement of the child's parents and a group of qualified professionals, as described in § 300.306(a)(1)—

> (1) If, prior to a referral, a child has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided instruction, as described in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section; and
> (2) Whenever a child is referred for an evaluation.

If the Student Support Team reviews presenting concerns and classroom data and suspects a handicapping condition, schedule a Review of Existing Education Data (REED) meeting to review the existing information and determine the next steps for evaluating the student.

The Student Support Team must NOT delay the referral to "wait for the student to fail" in the Response to Intervention paradigm if the team believes the interventions will not be effective or if the system is such that there will be adverse consequences for the student. If the impact of the interventions is unknown and there is reason to believe the student will benefit by taking the time for instructional assurances, then the team must give the student every opportunity to benefit from the instruction before proceeding to an evaluation.

If a parent suspects a handicapping condition and requests a referral for special education evaluation, the district must respond by scheduling a Review of Existing Education Data (REED) meeting to review the existing information and determine the next steps for evaluating the student.

Response to Intervention Was Not Attempted or Not Completed

The team may explain the district's Response to Intervention model and timeframes to the parent. If the parent agrees to give the model time, the team should not make a formal special education referral. Instead, develop a written plan of intervention and specify, in writing when data will be reviewed with the parent. Obtain parent written agreement to the plan and future meeting date.

If the parent does not agree to the instructional interventions of Response to Intervention, the team will proceed to complete the Review of Existing Evaluation Data. The team will identify the presenting concern and establish the necessary data to complete the full and individual evaluation. A trial of interventions may be concurrent to the administration of standardized tests and other efforts to collect evaluation data.

All evaluations must be completed and go to initial IEP within 30 school days, consistent with Michigan rules.

Section 5

Equitable Educational Practices

and

Professional Standards of Practice

There is no seeing without looking, no hearing without listening and both looking and listening are shaped by expectancy, stance, and intention.

-Jerome Bruner

5.1 Equitable Educational Practices

The purpose of public education is a reflection of the common good that supports all democratic systems: equitable education. Therefore, public education systems must ensure that all students have access to, and are enabled to participate in, activities that foster the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and information necessary to participate in society as informed and engaged citizens, contributing to their communities (Kozleski, 2009).

The standards of practice and roles of the professionals who are involved in the analysis of student data and development of intervention/placement decisions must remain conscientious to the culture and context of learning for the individual student as well as the highest principles of the laws that are foundational to this work.

Ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity requires that all public school systems become equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions that not only foster access by all students, but also embrace the commitment necessary to allow all students to participate in education actively and equitably. Inclusive systems are characterized by models that emphasize the context of teaching and learning as the primary means of providing equitable environments, and in which there is a focus on the way in which all students respond to interventions, focusing on differentiated instruction approaches and a general pedagogy that is culturally responsive. Equitable systems go beyond equal education by going beyond providing the same resources and opportunities: "Equity goes beyond equality: It means that all students must be given the real possibility of an equality of outcomes" (Nieto & Bode, 2008, p. 11).

Teachers who have worked to make their classrooms more culturally sensitive consciously reflect on the way they teach: Then ask whether their approaches are currently successful with all students. From that perspective, culturally sensitive instruction is closely aligned with what is recognized as good teaching. According to Johnson and Protheroe (2003), the four features of culturally sensitive instruction are defined:

1. It is pro-student, and all students are seen as having the inherent resources and ability to experience academic success.

2. It recognizes that there is no single best teaching method that will effectively reach all students at all times. Effective teachers diversify their instruction in response to individual students' interests, personalities, and abilities. This naturally should take into account differences in culture while not ignoring students' need to learn skills necessary for success in the larger community.

3. It adheres to the "principle of least change." This framework suggests only the minimum number of changes necessary to produce desirable learning effects should be undertaken at any given time.

4. It maintains an emphasis on the maintenance of high expectations and high academic standards for all children. The key to success is seen in modifying instructional approaches, not the desired outcomes.

In inclusive schools, educators create environments designed for all students and the focus of assessment shifts from the individual students to the context in which learning is to occur. A culturally responsive Response to Intervention (RtI) framework contributes to equitable practices by focusing on the monitoring and documenting of explicit skills and contexts. In turn, by focusing on specific skills and contexts, it shifts the focus from deficit theories that, in the past, linked a child's intelligence to their biological, social and cultural backgrounds. The essential culturally responsive and differentiated collaborative practices around student performance ensure that the student's opportunities to learn are being met.

As professionals who are examining student performance in the context of the educational systems, it will be imperative to uphold the practices and expectations that will ensure that student opportunities to learn are being met.

5.2 Professional Standards of Practice

The Michigan State Board of Education and Michigan Department of Education (2005) issued standards of professional ethics for Michigan educators. The ethics were developed to represent and uphold the standards of professionalism for each and every Michigan educator. The following ethical standards address the professional educator's commitment to the student and the profession.

1. **Service toward common good**
   ***Ethical Principle**: The professional educator's primary goal is to support the growth and development of all learners for the purpose of creating and sustaining an informed citizenry in a democratic society.*

2. **Mutual respect**
   ***Ethical principle:** Professional educators respect the inherent dignity and worth of each individual.*

3. **Equity**
   ***Ethical principle:** Professional educators advocate the practice of equity. The professional educator advocates for equal access to educational opportunities for each individual.*

4. **Diversity**
   ***Ethical principle:** Professional educators promote cross-cultural awareness by honoring and valuing individual differences and supporting the strengths of all individuals to ensure that instruction reflects the realities and diversity of the world.*

5. **Truth and honesty**
   ***Ethical principle:** Professional educators uphold personal and professional integrity and behave in a trustworthy manner. They adhere to acceptable social practices, current state law, state, and national student assessment guidelines, and exercise sound professional judgment.*

The ethical standards and the principles shall lead the intentions of the professionals who will participate in the processes of intervention, data collection, decision-making, and communications. The roles of leadership and the professionals who collaborate together are described as follows:

Professional Roles

State level leadership:

- To provide up to date guidance to support implementation
- To support a statewide common understanding of the elements of RtI
- To identify exemplary school-based models and best practices

District level leadership:

- Create a district-wide plan for RtI implementation including the plan for monitoring, implementation of the interventions, and addressing issues of fidelity of instruction
- Determine reading, mathematics, and behavior expectations
- Establish and support a common set of characteristics of the tiers in all classrooms
- Support the implementation of each tier of the RtI pyramid

Building level leadership: The building leader aligns resources to ensure quality instruction for every student and to support staff to do the work of teaching. Responsibilities include:

- Implement the plan for RTI, including the plan for monitoring implementation of the interventions and addressing issues of fidelity
- Create a school wide focus on assessment driving instruction
- Develop staff understanding of the RtI process
- Establish schedules to provide various times for interventions
- Ensure Tier I standards based instruction occurs in all classrooms
- Establish standard protocols of support for students needing Tier II support

Every staff member must be invested in the learning and progress for every student.

General education teachers: The general education teacher who is considered highly qualified by the standards set forth in No Child Left Behind (NCLB), ideally in the suspected area of deficit contributes to the Student Study Team. General education teachers **must** participate by doing the following:

- Assume active responsibility for delivery of high quality instruction to ensure fidelity
- Provide research-based interventions
- Promptly identify individuals at risk, adhering to district procedures and professional standards of ethics
- Collaborate with special education and related services personnel
- Provide formal and informal data, which supports the prescriptive interventions and the effectiveness, or lack thereof, used to support the student in question
- Conduct progress monitoring, using probes to continually adjust instruction and adapt to student learning needs

Student Support Team Members may include:

- Reading/Literacy Specialist
- Teachers of English Language

- Resource Room Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Teacher Consultant
- Speech Pathologist
- School Social Worker
- School Psychologist

Each profession participates in the team, bringing the expertise from their field and enriching the understanding of the child and the effectiveness of instruction through their collaborative interdisciplinary exchange. As teams evolve, the roles and responsibilities of team members may overlap and be implemented to best address the context of the team, the presenting concerns, and local procedures.

Suggested roles for Student Support Team Members are described:

- Review the data
- Support the interventions provided to the child as part of the general education curriculum and reporting data on these interventions to the team
- Consistently communicate with general education teachers
- Coach and model differentiated instruction, progress monitoring, and research-based interventions
- Increase adherence to fidelity of implementation of the intervention Observe the student to assist in determining appropriate general education interventions
- Determine affective factors that may impede academic progress
- Explore if the difficulties being experienced by the student are the result of emotional or environmental factors that are impacting him or her in the classroom setting
- Review records to identify learning opportunities and other factors that may contribute to learning difficulty
- Assess individual students using appropriate standardized instruments to develop a profile of student functioning
- Use standardized instruments, as well as informal techniques, to assess a student's pattern of strengths and weaknesses, and correlate these findings to current research as they relate to specific learning disability (SLD)

Parents

Parents play an important role in Student Support Team activities. They provide for their child's health, education, and care. Parents must be informed of interventions and their child's progress with interventions. Schools must provide parents with reports of repeated measures of student performance at reasonable intervals. It is important to seek parent input to make educational decisions that consider the child's development, learning patterns, and behaviors. Parents have responsibilities to communicate with the school and to be receptive to learning how to help their child succeed in school.

Section 6

Sample Forms for Documenting:

Student Intervention and Data Review (SIDR)
Fidelity of Intervention Implementation
Intervention Plans

This section includes sample forms that may be used to document the work of the Student Support Team, the interventions, and the fidelity of the interventions.

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

STUDENT INTERVENTION DATA REVIEW (SIDR)

Purpose

The Student Data and Review Form was created to assist district intervention teams in developing appropriate intervention strategies for at-risk students.

When a student is first identified as being at-risk either behaviorally or academically, it is not unusual for an intervention team (e.g. child study team, student assistance team, RtI team, individual consultation team) to conduct a record review as part of its problem solving /intervention process. With increased use of Response to Intervention models it is becoming ever more apparent that this single snapshot is an inadequate tool for ongoing planning. At-risk students may require a series of increasingly intense interventions before they are successful. Other students may respond to interventions at one point in their career but reemerge as at-risk at a subsequent time. A smaller number of students may not respond adequately to general education interventions and ultimately present with a suspected disability. In the case of a suspected disability a district must have data either prior to, or as part of the referral/evaluation process that any underachievement in reading or math that might be used as a basis for eligibility is not primarily the result of lack of appropriate instruction. Ongoing documentation of appropriate instruction is extremely useful in this context because it eliminates the need to reconstruct a student's educational history.

The Student Data and Review Form is a Microsoft Office based electronic file (Word, Excel) that documents relevant factors affecting the at-risk student's educational performance over time. Because it is an ongoing data review it eliminates episodic record reviews that soon become artifacts in the student's CA60. The Student Data and Review Form is also a helpful tool when a student is referred for a special education evaluation because of a suspected disability and the district must conduct a review of existing evaluation data (REED) as a prelude to evaluation planning for the student.

The Student Data and Review Form uses links to:

- Assist in general navigation through the document
- Display a ScreenTip box when the cursor hovers over a link
- Connect to information contained in this manual
- Connect to information on the web, e.g. MAASE LD wiki and other external sites.

Meeting Log

The first section of the form is a log of intervention team meetings. Each meeting will occupy a row in this section. At the beginning of the meeting date, grade, school, district, area(s) of concern and participants are filled in columns one and two. The participants review student performance data that has been prepared and entered onto the form either prior to and during this meeting. At the conclusion

of the meeting the participants are to identify "Next Steps". Next Steps could include (and may be copied and pasted from below to the form as appropriate):

*Continue with current intervention plan

*Modify current intervention plan (describe)

*Implement new intervention plan (describe)

*Intervention plan no longer needed

*More information needed (describe)

*Disability suspected, referral for Section 504 or special education evaluation (describe)

The cells in the log are expandable and new cells can be added over time.

Area(s) of Concern

Once an area of concern has been identified and dated, describe details for that area of concern and describe the student's current performance relative to grade-level peers.

Example:

Writing- 4th graders are able to use the writing process to develop clear and focused narrative and informational text of ten or more sentences. Jack uses prewriting activities but when writing rarely uses grade appropriate purpose, organization, details, voice/tone, grammar, usage, or mechanics.

Attendance, Discipline by Year

Total number of…

When behavior is checked as an area of concern (e.g., "social/emotional", "behavior/sensory") the team will review the student's attendance and disciplinary record year by year from entry into school through the date of the intervention team meeting in the current school year.

"Office referral" is anytime a student was sent to the office for behavioral concerns within a given school year. There may be more than one entry for a single behavior if the office referral is followed by an ISS or OSS.

- ISS- In School Suspension
- OSS- Out of School Suspension

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Describe the behaviors-

Describe the behavior(s) leading to OR, ISS and OSS, including the type and frequency of given violations of the discipline code.

Describe instructional supports provided during period of behavioral concern-

*Positive behavior supports – attach FBA/BIP as applicable

*Instruction provided during ISS and OSS

Achievement

Examples include (and are not limited to):

Benchmark/CBM Screening

- DIBELS
- AIMSWEB
- DRA
- STAR
- Jerry Johns

Progress Monitoring–

- DIBELS
- AIMSWEB
- Yearly Progress Pro
- EdCheckup

Criterion Referenced tests

- Brigance

Norm referenced tests – such as (and not limited to):

Reading

- Gray Oral Reading Test – 4th edition
- Test of Early Reading Ability – 3rd edition
- Woodcock Johnson Reading – 3rd edition/Normative Update
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Test – Revised/Normative Update

Language

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – 4th edition
- Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language
- Oral and Written Language Scales
- Test of Written Language – 4th edition
- Test of Written Spelling – 4th edition

Math

- Key Math 3rd edition
- Test of Early Mathematics Ability – 3rd edition

Achievement

- Diagnostic Assessment Battery – 3rd edition
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement 2nd edition
- Peabody Individual Achievement Test – Revised/Normative Update
- Test of Learning Development – Intermediate, 4th edition
- Test of Learning Development – Primary, 4th edition
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – 3rd edition

Curriculum Assessments aligned with GLCEs and classroom instruction

- Classroom assessments

State/District Assessments, e.g.,

- MEAP
- MEAP-Access
- MME
- NEAP

Additional Data

Cognitive Assessments

- WISC-4
- WAIS-4
- KABC-2
- KAIT
- CTONI-2
- KBIT-2
- WASI

Adaptive/Functional Behavior Scales

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

- Adaptive Behavior Evaluation Scale-2
- Adaptive Behavior Inventory
- AAMR Adaptive Behavior Scale - School
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales - 2

Grades

- Letter grades
- Descriptive, e.g., Meets/Exceeds Expectations, Does Not Meet Expectations

Teacher Report

- Narrative based on professional judgment of the teacher comparing student to others in the classroom

Observation in area of concern-

- Documented observation of the area of concern done by someone from the team.
- See, e.g., Classroom Observation Checklist

Other factors that may affect performance

In this section the intervention team participants are looking at possible non-instructional barriers to performance. Here the team should check any box where they have sufficient data to rule the factor in or out as a "contributor" to the academic or behavioral area of concern. The relevant data should be entered in the text box along with the information source and the date the information was obtained.

Examples of information to consider:

Vision- vision screening, nurse/records

Hearing- hearing screening, nurse/records

Motor- teacher, PE observation, physicals

Cognitive- child's rate of learning in other skills, listening comprehension, adaptive skills

Emotional- office referral rates, teacher/parent input whether child presents with dysfunctional behavior(s) in the educational setting with respect to being fearful, isolated, anxious, depressed, or angry

Cultural- individual performance in comparison to disaggregated performance data for the child's cultural/ethnic group

Environmental, Economic Disadvantage- individual performance data in comparison to disaggregated performance data for students qualifying for free and reduced lunch

LEP- English language proficiency test, received ELA services, targeted interventions in additional to ELA services, ELA and other services provided for a sufficient length of time so growth can be measured.

Observation

The child is observed in the child's learning environment documenting the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty by a member of the team. Log the intervention team's observation results in the SIDR log or use the following observation checklists:

- Pre-K / Kindergarten
- Grades 1 - 4
- Grades 5 - 8
- Grades 9 - 12

The checklists provide useful data by examining academic and behavioral areas in which a student is experiencing difficulties, including consideration of factors such as setting, accommodations (skills related to information input and output) and methodology of instruction. To obtain a more complete and accurate picture of the student's performance, it is recommended that the student be observed more than once, and if possible in different settings and different times of the day. Because no checklist can be all-inclusive, the forms provide a space for the observer to make notes regarding other behaviors, including strengths and weaknesses that may impact student learning and achievement.

Appropriate Instruction

In this section the intervention team will examine two key factors to the student's progress in school- the student's availability for instruction and the quality of instruction provided. With regard to availability for instruction, the team will examine whether there has been excessive instructional time lost due to absenteeism, disciplinary sanctions, tardiness and/or frequent school transfers. With regard to quality of instruction there are number of research-based factors associated with student proficiency. This section identifies these factors. Although there is no single formula for determining appropriate

instruction, the intervention team is asked to document existing data supporting these factors and to make an informed, professional judgment as to whether any of the factors deserve further consideration when developing intervention plans for the student.

For purposed of identifying supporting data, the intervention team should refer to the following definitions:

- **Explicit-** modeling, guided practice, practice to automaticity, integration
- **Systematic**- sequential, hierarchical, cumulative review. For reading, a "systematic" including daily instruction in all reading components.
- **Active**- student engagement/high levels of academic learning time.

Rate of Progress

Use the graph and the intervention text box(es) to record the following information:

- Baseline and progress data
- What differentiated, supplemental and/or targeted instruction or intervention was provided
- Interventionist(s)
- Size of the intervention group (i.e., group size or individual)
- Frequency / duration of the intervention (i.e. # of days/week, mins/day)

Worksheet for Charting Strengths and Weaknesses

This worksheet serves two intervention planning functions. In a tiered intervention process intervention teams may be initially interested in identifying areas of strength and weaknesses particularly for students who have not responded adequately to differentiated instruction in the general education classroom. The utility of identifying strengths and weaknesses at this stage is two-fold. First, strengths can sometimes be used to leverage intervention strategies in areas of weakness. Second, supplemental instruction by its very nature comes at the expense of core instructional time in another skill area. Generally, intervention teams will "borrow" this supplemental time from areas of stronger academic performance.

A second function for charting patterns of strengths and weaknesses becomes evident when the student continues inadequate progress to benchmarks despite increasingly intense general education

interventions, and the intervention team suspects a learning disability. (Note: inadequate response to intervention does not always equate to a suspected disability)

There are a number of different models that districts can use to "operationalize" the charting of Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses. The SIDR PSW grid is based on the research model of Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs and Barnes (2007), as adapted by Eugene, Oregon and Kalamazoo RESA. It is a PSW model that compares strengths and weaknesses among different academic skill areas. The model presented below reflects certain decision rules as to what constitutes a pattern, and what is a strength or weakness on various types of assessment measures. Your district may choose to adopt these decision rules or its own.

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Suggested Guidelines for Determining Strengths and Weaknesses

Assessment Type	Strength	Weaknesses
Benchmark Screening/CBM	At 'benchmark' level or above grade-level median score if using local norms.	At 'at-risk' level or below 10%ile if using local norms.
Progress monitoring	Meeting/exceeding aimline	Falling below aimline for at least 4 consecutive weeks on most recent tests.
Criterion-referenced assessment	Skills at or above grade level	Skills well below grade level
MEAP	Level 1 or 2	Level 3 or 4
Norm-referenced Achievement Tests	Standard Score $\geq$80 Percentile rank $\geq$ 30 Or RPI $\geq$76/90	Standard Score <80 Percentile rank < 9 Or RPI <67/90
Norm-referenced IQ	>1.0 to +2.0 Standard deviation $\geq$85 Standard Score >15th Percentile	<1.0 Standard deviation <85 Standard Score <15th Percentile
Curriculum assessments	Scores $\geq$ 80%	Scores $\leq$ 70%
Grades	A / B or 'meets/exceeds' expectations	D / E or 'does not meet' expectations
Teacher report	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom.	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom.
Observations- Academic	Student demonstrates average understanding of academic content in comparison to other students in classroom.	Student demonstrates that s/he does not understand the academic content.
Observations/Interview/Scales-Functional	Student demonstrates typical functional skills in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale $\geq$ 30.	Most of the student's functional skills appear to be well below average in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale $\leq$ 9.

 Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Examples of Published Assessments

(This is not a complete list)

Assessment Type	**Examples:**
Benchmark screening/CBM	DIBELS, AIMSweb, DRA, STAR, Jerry Johns
Progress monitoring	DIBELS, AIMSweb Yearly Progress Pro, EdCheckup
Criterion-referenced assessments	Brigance
Norm-referenced achievement tests	WRMT-2/NU, Key Math 3, KTEA-2, PIAT-2/NU, WIAT-2, WJ-3/NU, DAB-3, OWLS, GORT-4, TERA-3, TEMA-3, TOWL-4, TOLD:P-4, TOLD:I-4; TSW-4, CASL, CELF-4
IQ tests	WISC-4, WAIS-4, KABC-2, KAIT-2, CTONI-2, KBIT-2, WASI
Curriculum assessments aligned with CE's and classroom instruction	District assessments, Classroom assessments
Adaptive/functional behavior scales	Adaptive Behavior Scales-2, Adaptive Behavior Inventory, AAMR, Adaptive Behavior Scale-School, Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-2

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

STUDENT INTERVENTION AND DATA REVIEW

********AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE LOCATED ON THE LCISD WEBSITE or Easy IEP Main Page********

Meeting Log: Date, Grade, School, District and Concern	Team Participants (name, title)	Next Steps to Address Concern

Area(s) of Concern: ***(Enter date a concern is first discussed)***

	Basic Reading		Math Calculation		Behavior
	Reading Fluency		Math Problem Solving		Sensory
	Reading Comprehension		Hearing		Adaptive Functioning
	Writing		Vision		Health / Medical
	Communication/Language		Social / Emotional		Motor Functioning

Student strengths and interests:

Attendance, Discipline by Year

	Total number of:					Briefly describe or attach documentation:	
School Year	Absent	Tardy	Office Referrals	ISS	OSS	Behavior	Type of instructional support, if any

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Achievement						
Criteria: Data documenting achievement relative to age/state approved grade-level standards.						
Assessment Type		**List date and existing data**			**Identify date and additional data needs**	
Benchmark (CBM) screening						
Progress Monitoring (daily, weekly or bi-weekly intervals)						
Criterion referenced assessments						
Norm-referenced achievement tests						
Curriculum assessments aligned with GLCEs and classroom instruction						
State/District Tests (name)	**Year**	**Reading**	**Writing**	**Math**	**Science**	**Social St.**

Rate of Progress
Attach charts/graphs comparing student progress monitoring data to the student's goal line, e.g., DIBELS, AIMSWeb, EDCheckup, Yearly Progress Pro, behavior plan charting, etc.

Additional Data - on academic achievement, functional performance and intellectual development.		
Assessment Type	***List existing data and date***	***Identify additional data needs and date***
Cognitive assessment		
Adaptive/functional behavior scales		
Grades		
Teacher report (recommendations and observations)		
Parent input		
Observation in area of concern, including behavior		

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Other Factors That May Affect Performance: (*check each area with sufficient data)*					
Criteria: Data on other factors that may affect performance on appropriate age/grade-level standards or activities.					
	Vision		Cognitive		Environmental, Economic Disadvantage
	Hearing		Social/Emotional		English As Second Language
	Health		Cultural		Autism Spectrum Disorder
	Motor Functioning				
List date & existing information for any checked area(s)		***List date & data needed for any unchecked area(s)***			

Observation for Academic Performance and Behavior in the Area(s) of Difficulty			
Criteria: Data documenting that the student was observed in the learning environment (including general education setting) to document academic performance and behavior in the area(s) of difficulty			
Check skill area(s) of difficulty. Any checked skill area(s) should be observed.			
	Oral Expression		Reading Fluency Skills
	Listening Comprehension		Reading Comprehension
	Written Expression		Math Calculation
	Basic Reading Skills		Math Problem Solving
For any area(s) of concern document academic and behavioral data from any observation by using the provided Classroom Observation Checklists - OR - the Log below.			
Date	**Observer (Name/title)**	**Academic Area**	**Academic/Behavioral Results**

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Appropriate Instruction				
Criteria: Data demonstrating appropriate instruction. **Note:** *Consider the following only with respect to appropriate instruction in the area(s) of concern.*				
	Factors to be considered in the analysis of appropriate instruction in each area of academic concern		***List existing data supporting explicit, systematic and active instruction in each area of concern checked below***	**If data is not available, what will be done to document appropriate instruction?** Describe appropriate instruction during intervention period or other.
WHAT	**Essential Components of Reading Instruction**			
		Phonemic Awareness- ability to notice, think about, and work with individual sounds in a spoken word		**Describe:**
		Phonics- an understanding of the relationship between letters or written language and the individual sounds of spoken language		**Describe:**
		Vocabulary- the words we must know to communicate effectively		**Describe:**
		Fluency- the ability to read text accurately and quickly with proper expression		**Describe:**
		Comprehension- understanding the meaning of what is read.		**Describe:**
		Concepts and Reasoning		**Describe:**
		Automatic Recall-# facts		
		Computation Algorithms		
		Functional Math		
		Verbal Problem Solving		
		Oral Expression		**Describe:**
		Written Expression		
		Listening Comprehension		
	Curriculum Alignment		**List existing alignment data**	
	Evidence that district curriculum is aligned to the Curriculum Expectations (CE's)			**Describe:**
	Evidence that curriculum materials are research-based and aligned to the CEs			**Describe:**

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

		List existing data supporting the appropriate instruction factor	
Who	**Highly Qualified Teachers** Are teachers highly qualified?		
How	Fidelity of Instructional Implementation- Evidence that 80% of students in the student's classrooms meeting state/district-wide standards over the grades		**Describe:**
	Differentiated Instruction changes when formative assessment suggests student is at-risk: e.g. Universal design practices, research-based intervention practices		**Describe:**
	Student attendance at least 85% of instructional days - File review for absenteeism, school enrollment, history, discipline		**Describe:**
	Parent provided data-based documentation of repeated assessments at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of progress during instruction.		**Describe:**

 Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

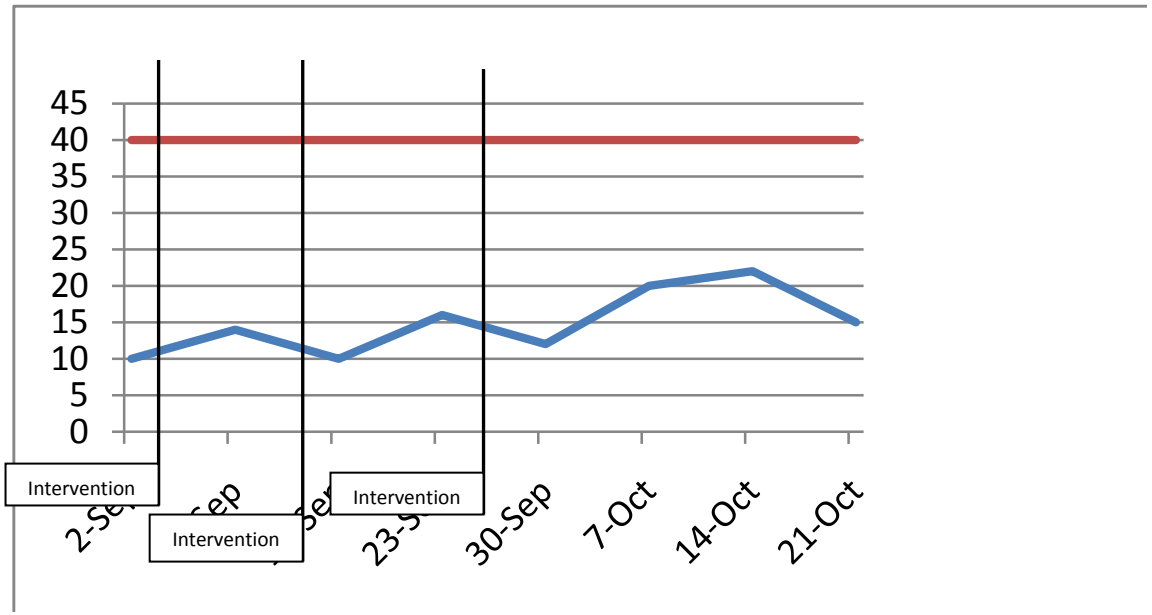
Parent Notice		
Criteria: Parent Notice When Student Participates in Scientific Research-based Intervention Process		
Required Documentation [help]	***List Existing Data***	***Identify Additional Data Needs***
1) State or district policies given to parents	*Date written policies provided:*	
2) Notice that parent can request evaluation	*Date written notice provided:*	
3) Indicate instructional strategies used and data on results collected	*Describe intervention:*	
4) Attach data or edit graph(s) below. [help] *To edit a graph: right click / Chart Object*		

(See next pages for examples of progress data charts that can be created or copied and included in this report.

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Progress Monitoring from: _____ **to** _____ **Skill Area/Behavior:** _____

Name of Assessment: _____ **Type of data collected:** _____



Student: _____ DOB: _____ Date_____

Worksheet for Charting Strengths and Weaknesses								
Criteria: Data Demonstrating Pattern(s) of Strengths and Weaknesses in Performance, Achievement or both Relative to Age/State Approved Grade-level Standards or Intellectual Development								
In each box below, indicate: *S = Strength* *W = Weakness* *N = Neither*	**Academic Achievement with respect to grade-level expectations**		**Academic Achievement with respect to age-level expectations**	**Classroom performance with respect to grade-level expectations**				**Areas of Age/appropriate functional/ intellectual skills**
Areas of Academic Achievement	Progress Monitoring, CBM or criterion referenced instruments	MEAP	Norm-referenced achievement test	Curriculum Assessments	Grades	Teacher Report	Classroom Observation	Observation, interviews, IQ assessment
Basic Reading								
Reading Fluency								
Reading Comprehension								
Math Calculation								
Math Problem Solving								
Written Expression								
Oral Expression								
Listening Comprehension								

Suggested Guidelines for Determining Strengths and Weaknesses:

See SIDR Manual for sample decision rules on how to determine whether a particular performance on a given assessment is rated as a strength **"S"** or weakness

Pattern of Strengths (at least 3 "**S**" in a given skill area): _____

Pattern of Weaknesses (at least 4 "**W**" in a given skill area, including at least 1 individually administered academic achievement assessment): _____

Observation Checklist for Pre-academic/Academic Areas of Concern – Pre-school / Kindergarten

Student: _____ Grade: ___ Teacher/Location: _____
Observer: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Activities: _____

Directions: First, identify the area(s) of concern in the box below. Your observation should focus on the identified area(s). During the observation, place a check mark next to the behaviors that are listed within each domain that correlates with the noted area(s) of concern. These checklists are not exhaustive, so you may want make notes regarding other additional behavior observed, including strengths and behaviors which may interfere with the student's learning. In order to obtain a full and accurate picture of the student's performance, it may be necessary to observe the student more than once, possibly in different settings and at different times of the day. If a child is less than school age or out of school (e.g. drop-out, suspended, expelled) observations should be conducted in an environment appropriate for his/her age.

Check area(s) of concern [help]			
□ Oral Expression	□ Basic Reading	□ Reading Comprehension	□ Math Calculation
□ Listening Comprehension	□ Reading Fluency	□ Written Expression	□ Math Problem Solving

Instructional Domain

Instructional Activities (i.e. individual seatwork, small group cooperative work, reading lesson, math lesson, etc.)	**Instructional Materials** (i.e. worksheets, computers, overhead projector, manipulatives, calculator, etc.)	**Manner of Presentation** (i.e. teacher-directed, small group, new skill modeling, guided practice, whole group, etc.)

Academic Skills

Language (Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension, Basic Reading - Phonemic Awareness) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty re-telling what has just been said
□ Difficulty modulating voice (e.g., too soft, too loud)	□ Slow/halting speech, using fillers (e.g., uh, you know, um)
□ Difficulty naming people or objects	□ Difficulty with pronouncing words
□ Difficulty staying on topic	□ Difficulty rhyming
□ Difficulty in explaining things (e.g. feelings, ideas) due to lack of vocabulary, articulation, and/or grammar skills	□ Difficulty with phonemic awareness tasks (e.g., saying initial sounds, saying sounds of words, saying words fast)
□ Difficulty understanding instructions or directions	□ Limited interest in books or stories

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Reading (Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty reading short, irregular sight words
□ Difficulty identifying sounds	□ Difficulty retelling what has been read
□ Difficulty blending sounds into words	□ Difficulty with retention of new vocabulary
□ Difficulty reading short, regular words	□ Difficulty demonstrating comprehension of sentences/stories

Notes: _____
_____

Preschool / Kindergarten - Pg. 2

Written Language (Written Expression) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with drawing familiar shapes
□ Difficulty with holding writing instruments	□ Difficulty with naming, copying or writing letters
□ Difficulty copying / tracing	□ Frequent letter, number, and symbol reversals

Notes: _____
_____
_____

Math (Math Calculation, Math Problem Solving) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty in recognizing numbers
□ Difficulty counting aloud	□ Difficulty in comparing relative size (e.g. numbers, objects)
□ Difficulty in one-to one correspondence when counting Objects	□ Difficulty in matching number symbol to corresponding objects

Notes: _____
_____
_____

Functional Skills

Social Emotional (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with self-control when frustrated.
□ Difficulty 'joining in' and maintaining positive social status in a peer group.	□ Difficulty using other students as models to cue self on appropriate behavior
□ Difficulty with sharing (e.g., objects, teacher's time)	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Attention (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty sustaining attention in work or play activities

Notes: _____
_____
_____

Gross and Fine Motor Skills (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Poor ability to color or write 'within the lines'
□ Awkward and clumsy motor skills (dropping, spilling, or knocking things over)	□ Writing instruments awkwardly, resulting in poor handwriting, drawing
□ Difficulty with buttons, zippers, hooks, snaps and tying Shoes	□ Difficulty using small objects or items that demand precision (e.g., legos, puzzle pieces, scissors)
□ Art work that is immature for age	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Preschool / Kindergarten - Pg. 3

Effort/Motivation – During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Hesitance in beginning work	□ Carelessness in work
□ An inability to start work without adult prompting	□ Eager to please
□ Persistent effort	□ Apathetic/Indifferent
□ Gives up easily	□ Refused to work

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Summary of academic performance/behavior observed in area(s) of difficulty:
_____
_____
_____

Observation Checklist for Pre-academic/academic Areas of Concern – Grades 1-4

Student: _____ Grade: ___ Teacher/Location: _____
Observer: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Activities: _____
Directions: First, identify the area(s) of concern in the box below. Your observation should focus on the identified area(s). During the observation, place a check mark next to the behaviors that are listed within each domain that correlates with the noted area(s) of concern. These checklists are not exhaustive, so you may want make notes regarding other additional behavior observed, including strengths and behaviors which may interfere with the student's learning. In order to obtain a full and accurate picture of the student's performance, it may be necessary to observe the student more than once, possibly in different settings and at different times of the day. If a child is out of school (e.g. drop-out, suspended, expelled) observations should be conducted in an environment appropriate for his/her age.

Check area(s) of concern for evaluation:			
□ Oral Expression	□ Basic Reading	□ Reading Comprehension	□ Math Calculation
□ Listening Comprehension	□ Reading Fluency	□ Written Expression	□ Math Problem Solving

Instructional Domain

Instructional Activities (i.e. individual seatwork, small group cooperative work, reading lesson, math lesson, etc.)	**Instructional Materials** (i.e. worksheets, computers, overhead projector, manipulatives, calculator, etc.)	**Manner of Presentation** (i.e. teacher-directed, small group, new skill modeling, guided practice, whole group, etc.)

Academic Skills

Language (Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension, Basic Reading - Phonemic Awareness) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate	□ Difficulty re-telling what has just been said
□ Difficulty modulating voice (e.g., too soft, too loud)	□ Slow/halting speech, using fillers (e.g., uh, you know, um)
□ Difficulty naming people or objects	□ Difficulty with pronouncing words
□ Difficulty staying on topic	□ Difficulty rhyming
□ Difficulty in explaining things (e.g. feelings, ideas) due to use of imprecise language and limited vocabulary	□ Difficulty with phonemic awareness tasks (e.g., saying initial sounds, saying sounds of words, saying words fast)
□ Difficulty understanding instructions or directions	□ Poor grammar or misuses words in conversation
□ Inserts malapropisms into conversation	□ Difficulty with pragmatic skills (e.g., understands the relationship between speaker and listener, staying on topic, making inferences)

Notes: _____
_____

Reading (Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Slow oral reading skills that may interfere with comprehension
□ Difficulty identifying sounds, blending sounds into words	□ Difficulty retelling what has been read
□ Difficulty reading regular words	□ Difficulty with retention of new vocabulary
□ Difficulty reading irregular sight words	□ Difficulty demonstrating comprehension of sentences/stories
□ Difficulty when reading sentences; may frequently lose place, omit words, insert words, substitute words, guess from initial sounds, reverse words, make self-corrections	

Written Language (Written Expression) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Frequent reversals of letters and numbers
□ Difficulty with holding writing instruments	□ Uneven spacing between letters and words, has trouble staying 'on the line'
□ Messy and incomplete writing, with many cross-outs and Erasures	□ Inaccurate copying skills (e.g., confuses similar-looking letters and numbers
□ Difficulty remembering shapes of letters and numbers	□ Poor and inconsistent spelling
□ Difficulty proofreading and self-correcting work	□ Complete written assignments

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Math (Math Calculation, Math Problem Solving) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with comparisons
□ Difficulty with simple counting and one-to-one correspondence between number and objects	□ Difficulty telling time or conceptualizing the passage of time
□ Difficulty counting by other numbers (2's, 5's, 10's)	□ Difficulty solving one-step word problems
□ Difficulty estimating quantity (e.g., quantity, value)	□ Difficulty solving facts and longer operations

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Functional Skills

Social Emotional (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with self-control when frustrated.
□ Difficulty 'joining in' and maintaining positive social status in a peer group.	□ Difficulty using other students as models to cue self on appropriate behavior
□ Difficulty in 'picking up' on other people's moods/feelings	□ Difficulty knowing how to share/express feelings
□ Difficulty detecting or responding appropriately to teasing	□ Difficulty dealing with group pressure, embarrassment and unexpected challenges
□ Difficulty in understanding the social hierarchy (students, teachers, administrators) of school	□ Difficulty in following directions – may be a can't do (lack of vocabulary) or a won't do problem

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Attention (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty sustaining attention in work or play activities
□ Difficulty organizing tasks and activities	□ Difficulty with losing things that are necessary for tasks
□ Difficulty with remembering daily/routine activities	□ Difficulty by being easily distracted

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Gross and Fine Motor Skills (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Poor ability to color or write 'within the lines'
□ Awkwardness and clumsiness (dropping, spilling, or knocking things over)	□ Awkward grasp of writing instruments, resulting in poor handwriting, drawing
□ Difficulty with buttons, zippers, hooks, snaps and tying Shoes	□ Difficulty using small objects or items that demand precision (e.g., legos, puzzle pieces, scissors)
□ Art work that is immature for age	□ Limited success with games and activities that demand eye-to-hand coordination (e.g. musical instruments, sports)

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Other Notes or Observed Behavior - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Confusion of left and right	□ Difficulty learning new games and mastering puzzles
□ Loses things often	□ Difficulty generalizing or applying skills from one situation to another

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Effort/Motivation – During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Hesitance in beginning work	□ Carelessness in work
□ An inability to start work without adult prompting	□ Eager to please
□ Persistent effort	□ Apathetic/Indifferent
□ Gives up easily	□ Refused to work

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Summary of academic performance/behavior observed in area(s) of difficulty:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Observation Checklist for Pre-academic/Academic Areas of Concern – Grades 5-8

Student: _____ Grade: ___ Teacher/Location: _____
Observer: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Activities: _____

Directions: First, identify the area(s) of concern in the box below. Your observation should focus on the identified area(s). During the observation, place a check mark next to the behaviors that are listed within each domain that correlates with the noted area(s) of concern. These checklists are not exhaustive, so you may want make notes regarding other additional behavior observed, including strengths and behaviors which may interfere with the student's learning. In order to obtain a full and accurate picture of the student's performance, it may be necessary to observe the student more than once, possibly in different settings and at different times of the day. If a child is out of school (e.g. drop-out, suspended, expelled) observations should be conducted in an environment appropriate for his/her age.

Check area(s) of concern for evaluation:			
□ Oral Expression	□ Basic Reading	□ Reading Comprehension	□ Math Calculation
□ Listening Comprehension	□ Reading Fluency	□ Written Expression	□ Math Problem Solving

Instructional Domain

Instructional Activities (i.e. individual seatwork, small group cooperative work, reading lesson, math lesson, etc.)	**Instructional Materials** (i.e. worksheets, computers, overhead projector, manipulatives, calculator, etc.)	**Manner of Presentation** (i.e. teacher-directed, small group, new skill modeling, guided practice, whole group, etc.)

Academic Skills

Language (Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension, Basic Reading - Phonemic Awareness) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty re-telling what has just been said
□ Difficulty modulating voice (e.g., too soft, too loud)	□ Inserted malapropisms into conversation
□ Difficulty naming people or objects	□ Difficulty with pronouncing words
□ Difficulty staying on topic	□ Poor grammar or misuses words in conversation
□ Difficulty in explaining things (e.g. feelings, ideas) due to use of imprecise language and limited vocabulary	□ Difficulty with pragmatic skills (e.g., understands the relationship between speaker and listener, staying on topic, making inferences)
□ Difficulty understanding instructions or directions	□ Slow/halting speech, using fillers (e.g., uh, you know, um)

Notes: _____
_____
_____

Reading (Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty retelling what has been read
□ Difficulty reading grade level sight words	□ Difficulty with retention of new vocabulary
□ Difficulty reading common words seen in school/community	□ Difficulty demonstrating literal comprehension of sentences/stories
□ Difficulty when reading sentences; may frequently lose place, omit words, insert words, substitute words, guess from initial sounds, reverse words, make self-corrections	□ Difficulty demonstrating inferential comprehension of stories and connections between stories

Notes: _____
_____

Written Language (Written Expression) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty proofreading and self-correcting work
□ Messy and incomplete writing, with many cross-outs and Erasures	□ Poor and inconsistent spelling
□ Uneven spacing between letters and words, has trouble staying 'on the line'	□ Difficulty developing ideas in writing so written work is incomplete and too brief.
□ Inaccurate copying skills (e.g., confuses similar-looking letters and numbers	□ Difficulty completing written assignments

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Math (Math Calculation, Math Problem Solving) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with comparisons (e.g., less than, greater than)
□ Difficulty counting by single digit numbers, 10's 100's	□ Difficulty telling time or conceptualizing the passage of time
□ Difficulty aligning numbers resulting in computation errors	□ Difficulty solving word problems
□ Difficulty estimating quantity (e.g., quantity, value)	□ Difficulty solving facts and longer operations
□ Difficulty interpreting / creating charts and graphs	□ Difficulty understanding / applying measurement concepts

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Functional Skills

Social Emotional (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with self-control when frustrated.
□ Difficulty 'joining in' and maintaining positive social status in a peer group.	□ Difficulty using other students as models to cue self on appropriate behavior
□ Difficulty in 'picking up' on other people's moods/feelings	□ Difficulty knowing how to share/express feelings
□ Difficulty detecting or responding appropriately to teasing	□ Difficulty dealing with group pressure, embarrassment and unexpected challenges
□ Difficulty in understanding the social hierarchy (students, teachers, administrators) of school	□ Difficulty in following directions – may be a can't do (lack of vocabulary) or a won't do problem
□ Difficulty with 'getting to the point' (e.g., gets bogged down in details in conversation)	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Attention (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty sustaining attention in work or play activities
□ Difficulty organizing tasks and activities	□ Difficulty with losing things that are necessary for tasks
□ Difficulty with remembering daily/routine activities	□ Difficulty by being easily distracted
□ Failure to pay close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork or other activities	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Gross and Fine Motor Skills (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Limited success with games and activities that demand eye-to-hand coordination (e.g. musical instruments, sports)
□ Awkwardness and clumsiness (dropping, spilling, or knocking things over)	□ Grasps writing instruments awkwardly, resulting in poor handwriting, drawing

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Other Notes or Observed Behavior - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Confusion of left and right	□ Difficulty learning new games and mastering puzzles
□ Loses things often	□ Difficulty generalizing or applying skills from one situation to another
□ Finds it hard to judge speed and distance	□ Difficulty reading charts and maps
□ Difficulty with organization and planning	□ Difficulty listening and taking notes at the same time

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Effort/Motivation – During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Hesitance in beginning work	□ Carelessness in work
□ An inability to start work without adult prompting	□ Eager to please
□ Persistent effort	□ Apathetic/Indifferent
□ Gives up easily	□ Refused to work

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Summary of academic performance/behavior observed in area(s) of difficulty:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Observation Checklist for Pre-academic/Academic Areas of Concern– Grades 9-12

Student: _____ Grade: ___ Teacher/Location: _____
Observer: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Activities: _____

Directions: First, identify the area(s) of concern in the box below. Your observation should focus on the identified area(s). During the observation, place a check mark next to the behaviors that are listed within each domain that correlates with the noted area(s) of concern. These checklists are not exhaustive, so you may want make notes regarding other additional behavior observed, including strengths and behaviors which may interfere with the student's learning. In order to obtain a full and accurate picture of the student's performance, it may be necessary to observe the student more than once, possibly in different settings and at different times of the day. If a child is out of school (e.g. drop-out, suspended, expelled) observations should be conducted in an environment appropriate for his/her age.

Check area(s) of concern for evaluation:			
□ Oral Expression	□ Basic Reading	□ Reading Comprehension	□ Math Calculation
□ Listening Comprehension	□ Reading Fluency	□ Written Expression	□ Math Problem Solving

Instructional Domain

Instructional Activities (i.e. individual seatwork, small group cooperative work, reading lesson, math lesson, etc.)	**Instructional Materials** (i.e. worksheets, computers, overhead projector, manipulatives, calculator, etc.)	**Manner of Presentation** (i.e. teacher-directed, small group, new skill modeling, guided practice, whole group, etc.)

Academic Skills

Language (Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension, Basic Reading - Phonemic Awareness) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty re-telling what has just been said
□ Difficulty modulating voice (e.g., too soft, too loud)	□ Inserts malapropisms into conversation
□ Confuses words with others that sound familiar	□ Difficulty with pronouncing words
□ Difficulty staying on topic	□ Poor grammar or misuses words in conversation
□ Difficulty in explaining things (e.g. feelings, ideas) due to use of imprecise language and limited vocabulary	□ Difficulty with pragmatic skills (e.g., understands the relationship between speaker and listener, staying on topic, making inferences)
□ Difficulty understanding instructions or directions	□ Demonstrates slow/halting speech, using fillers (e.g., uh, you know, um)

Notes: _____
_____

Reading (Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty retelling what has been read
□ Difficulty reading content area sight words	□ Difficulty with retention of new vocabulary
□ Difficulty reading common words seen in school/community	□ Difficulty demonstrating literal comprehension of sentences/stories
□ Difficulty when reading sentences; may frequently lose place, omit words, insert words, substitute words, guess from initial sounds, reverse words, make self-corrections	□ Difficulty demonstrating inferential comprehension of stories and connections between stories/ideas
□ Demonstrates slow oral reading skills that may interfere with comprehension	

Notes: _____
_____

Written Language (Written Expression) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty proofreading and self-correcting work
□ Messy and incomplete writing, with many cross-outs and Erasures	□ Poor and inconsistent spelling
□ Uneven spacing between letters and words, has trouble staying 'on the line'	□ Difficulty developing ideas in writing so written work is incomplete and too brief.
□ Inaccurate copying skills (e.g., confuses similar-looking letters and numbers	□ Difficulty completing written assignments

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Math (Math Calculation, Math Problem Solving) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Grade appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with comparisons (e.g., less than, greater than)
□ Difficulty counting by single digit numbers, 10's 100's	□ Difficulty telling time or conceptualizing the passage of time
□ Difficulty aligning numbers resulting in computation errors	□ Difficulty solving word problems
□ Difficulty estimating quantity (e.g., quantity, value)	□ Difficulty solving facts and longer operations
□ Difficulty interpreting / creating charts and graphs	□ Difficulty understanding / applying measurement concepts

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Functional Skills

Social Emotional (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty with self-control when frustrated.
□ Difficulty 'joining in' and maintaining positive social status in a peer group.	□ Difficulty using other students as models to cue self on appropriate behavior
□ Difficulty in 'picking up' on other people's moods/feelings	□ Difficulty knowing how to share/express feelings
□ Difficulty detecting or responding appropriately to teasing	□ Difficulty dealing with group pressure, embarrassment and unexpected challenges
□ Difficulty in understanding the social hierarchy (students, teachers, administrators) of school	□ Difficulty in following directions – may be a can't do (lack of vocabulary) or a won't do problem
□ Difficulty with 'getting to the point' (e.g., gets bogged down in details in conversation)	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Attention (All Areas) - - Student has:	
□ Age appropriate skills	□ Difficulty sustaining attention in work or play activities
□ Difficulty organizing tasks and activities	□ Difficulty with losing things that are necessary for tasks
□ Difficulty with remembering daily/routine activities	□ Difficulty by being easily distracted
□ Failure to pay close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork or other activities	

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Gross and Fine Motor Skills (All Areas) - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Has age appropriate skills	□ Limited success with games and activities that demand eye-to-hand coordination (e.g. musical instruments, sports)
□ Appears awkward and clumsy, dropping, spilling, or knocking things over	□ Grasps writing instruments awkwardly, resulting in poor handwriting, drawing

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Other Notes or Observed Behavior - - During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Confusion of left and right	□ Difficulty learning new games and mastering puzzles
□ Loses things often	□ Difficulty generalizing or applying skills from one situation to another
□ Difficulty judging speed and distance	□ Difficulty reading charts and maps
□ Difficulty with organization and poor planning	□ Difficulty listening and taking notes at the same time

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Effort/Motivation – During observation student demonstrated:	
□ Hesitance in beginning work	□ Carelessness in work
□ An inability to start work without adult prompting	□ Eager to please
□ Persistent effort	□ Apathetic/Indifferent
□ Gives up easily	□ Refused to work

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Summary of academic performance/behavior observed in area(s) of difficulty:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Parent/Guardian Invitation to Student Support Team
District Name
Address City,
State

Date:

Dear Parents/Guardians of _____,

Our school is using a general education intervention process to help each student achieve school success. This process is known as Response-to-Intervention (RtI).

We would like to invite you to a Student Support Team meeting to explain this process to you and to discuss how we can work with you to provide school support for your son/daughter. The meeting is scheduled for:

Date:

Time:

Room:

Your child's classroom teacher as well as other staff members will be there to share information with you and to develop a Student Support Team Intervention Plan for your child.

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher if you would like us to invite someone to the meeting or if you need to reschedule.

Thank you. We are looking forward to meeting with you.

_____ _____
Building Administrator Date

_____ _____
Name/Title Date

Parent Information Letter-Tier I

Date

Dear (parent's name):

At the beginning of the school year we sent a letter explaining our multi-tiered model for ensuring all students are making adequate gains in their learning. That letter described our universal screening process and on-going progress monitoring of student performance. During our phone conversation on (date), we discussed (student's name) at-risk performance on the screening and that his/her teacher, (teacher's name), will begin using different strategies and materials in (content area) as part of our Tier 1 Response to Intervention (RtI) efforts to help (student name) meet grade level standards. This is a follow-up letter to that discussion.

As part of our Tier 1 intervention efforts, we will continue to monitor your child's progress toward grade level standards. If (student name) needs additional or more intensive strategies, we will (Option A: invite you to an intervention team meeting to discuss these supplemental interventions or Option B: contact you to let you know what supplemental interventions will be provided.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me or Ms/Mr. (classroom teacher) at (telephone number).

Sincerely,

Principal

Parent Information Letter-Tier II

Date

Dear (parent's name):

This is a follow-up letter to our (intervention team meeting or phone conversation) on (date). As we discussed (child's name) will begin Tier II supplemental interventions on (date).

As a part of the Tier II interventions within the Response to Intervention Framework, (child's name) will receive supplemental instruction to the general (reading, math, writing) curriculum. This will include, an additional (X) minutes of focused instruction (X) times per week for a minimum of (X) weeks.

Additionally, we will contact you shortly to explain the supplemental activities so you are aware of the techniques and can help to reinforce these skills at home.

During the Tier II interventions, we will continue to monitor your child's progress towards grade level content standards. If at the conclusion of the (X) week for Tier II intervention, (child's name) has not responded adequately, we will convene an intervention team meeting to discuss further intervention options. You will receive an invitation to attend the meeting.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me or Ms./Mr. (classroom teacher) at (telephone number).

Sincerely,

Principal

Parent Information Letter-Tier III

Date

Dear (parent's name):

As you recall, in our efforts to provide an effective education for all students, the district uses a multi-tier intervention model to assist students to meet state approved grade level content standards. Despite Tier 1 differentiated instruction and supplemental intervention of XXX minutes XXX times/week for XXX weeks at Tier II, (students' name) has not been able to progress at a pace or level necessary to achieve or sustain learning at benchmark levels.

We would like to invite you to a meeting of the (name of team) intervention team to be held on (date) at (time) in (place). The purpose of this meeting is to discuss other intervention options at Tier III of our intervention process.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me or Ms./Mr. (classroom teacher) at (telephone number).

Sincerely,

Principal

Parent/Guardian Input and Survey

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____

1. What are your child's greatest strengths?

2. What are your child's interests?

3. What are your concerns about your child's progress and performance in school?

4. Does your child need help with homework on a regular basis?

5. Does your child receive (current or in the past) special support outside of school (i.e. tutoring, therapy)?

6. How would you describe your child's feelings about school?

7. What do you think helps your child to be successful in school?

Parent Survey Continued

DIRECTIONS: Identify strengths with an "S" and difficulties with a "D".

READING
___Vocabulary
___Understands what he/she reads
___Reading pace
___Reading for fun

MATH
___Basic math facts
___Understands math
___Solving problems

SPEECH
___Speaks clearly
___Grammar
___Organization of ideas

WRITTEN LANGUAGE
___Spelling
___Grammar
___Organization of ideas

WORK HABITS
___Attention span
___Following directions
___Listening skills
___Assignment completion
___Organization of materials
___Time management
___Homework

___Self-Image
___Response to stress
___Peer interactions
___Adult interactions
___Takes responsibility
___Activity level
___Impulsivity
___Loner

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
___Withdrawal
___Empathy towards others
___Helpful to others
___Leadership
___Independence
___Self-advocacy
___Follows rules
___Conflict resolution skills

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
___Team work
___Motivation
___Independent work habits
___Asks for help
___Gets along with teacher
___Attendance
___Cheating

PHYSICAL
___Appearance/hygiene
___Appetite
___Energy level
___Eyesight
___Hearing
___Coordination
___General health

Is there anything else you want us to know about your child that was not addressed here?

How is it best to communicate with you? Phone: _____Email: _____Other: _____

Phone: _____Email: _____

Survey completed by: _____Relationship to student:_____

Student Interview

Student Name: _____School: _____

Grade: _____Age: _____Teacher: _____

Interviewer: _____ Position: _____Date: _____

Instructions: Interviewer should modify the language in this interview form to consider the age of the student. **This does not have to read word for word.**

1) What are your greatest strengths: In what areas do you do best? What are you most proud of doing?

2) In what area(s) could you improve the most? What things are most difficult about school for you?

3) What class/subject gave you the most difficulty last year? What is the one thing you can identify that made it difficult?

4) If we only picked one thing to focus on, what would you like for us to work on that would help you improve at school? What is one thing you would like to be different?

Student Interview continued

5) Are you involved in any sports/clubs/activities at school or outside of school? What organization?

6) When you think about what area you need help improving, think about what helps you learn best:

a) Curriculum: Are there certain material/papers/assignments that make learning more or less difficult? (e.g., true/false tests are confusing) What is your favorite kind of assignment? What is your least favorite kind of assignment?

b) Instruction: What does your teacher do that makes learning easier for you? (e.g., the teacher gives you review notes.) What does your teacher do that makes learning harder for you? (e.g., directions are confusing.)

c) Environment: Are there things about the classroom or where you study at home that make learning more or less difficult? (e.g., kids near me want to talk, so I join in.)

d) Learner: What things do you know about yourself that may help us help you to be more successful? (e.g., if I have to write down assignments, I seem to remember it better.) What will help you to be more successful in school and learn?

6.2 Fidelity of Implementation

Fidelity is critical to the design and implementation of a successful Response to Intervention (RtI) framework. Fidelity is the delivery of a program, intervention or system as it is intended with accuracy and consistency. To ensure that instruction and interventions are implemented with fidelity, a careful and systematic monitoring process by the building administrator or his/her designee must be established. Fidelity is important at the school level in documenting the implementation of the process and at the teacher level with instructional practice, interventions, and the monitoring of student progress.

How can schools ensure fidelity of implementation? (NRCLD 2006)

- Link interventions to improved outcomes (credibility)
- Definitively describe operations, techniques, and components
- Clearly define responsibilities of specific persons
- Create a data system for measuring operations, techniques, and components
- Create a system for feedback and decision making (formative)
- Create accountability measures for non-compliance

There are several approaches that can be used to assess fidelity (Roach & Elliott, 2008):

- **Self-report**
  The person who is delivering (teaching) the intervention keeps a log or completes a checklist which records the critical components of the intervention.

- **Permanent Products**
  Data and artifacts/documentation of the implementation of the intervention are analyzed to determine if critical components were followed.

- **Observations**
  Observations of the delivery of the intervention are conducted, checking for the presence or absence and accuracy of implementation and critical intervention components.

Essential Questions: What is fidelity? (Parisi et. al., 2007)

Surface fidelity

- Were key components implemented?
- Was adequate time allowed?
- Was the specific amount of material covered?

Quality of delivery

Teacher behaviors

- How is the teacher differentiating?
- Can you identify the standards based teaching practices?
- Is the teacher using formative assessment to guide instruction?
- Is there a range of teaching methods?

Student behaviors

- Are the students engaged in learning?
- What are the students doing?
- Are the students working together?
- Is there evidence of active or passive learning?

Fidelity Checklist
Tier I

Student: _____Teacher: _____

Grade: _____Age:_____ School: _____

Scientific, research-based core curriculum instruction and behavioral supports in general education have been implemented with fidelity for this student.

___Yes ___No **Evidence of Quality Tier I Core Level Standards-Based Learning**
The student is placed in a general education classroom where a highly qualified teacher is providing appropriate curriculum and instructional strategies.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Fidelity of Instruction**
The curriculum was implemented with fidelity for this student.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Differentiation of Instruction**
Instruction is differentiated to include appropriate accommodations and scaffolds to meet the needs of the student.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Repeated Measures of Student Performance**
Data for universal benchmark screening was collected at least three times a year and compared to grade-level peers in the district. The student scores in the lowest 25th percentile of his/her peer group based on this data.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

Administrator/Designee Signature: _____Date: _____

Fidelity Checklist
Tier II

Student: _____ Teacher: _____

Grade: _____ Age:_____ School: _____

Tier II targeted supplementary instruction was provided to this student as planned.

___Yes ___No **Evidence of Tier II Strategic Needs-Based Learning**
The student has received targeted scientific, research-based interventions for 4 - 9 weeks.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Fidelity of Intervention**
The intervention(s) was (were) implemented with fidelity for this student (including core curriculum, supplemental curriculum, and strategies).
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Progress Monitoring Data**
The student's progress was monitored with repeated measures of the student performance, which was reported to parents. Assessment data was compared to peers, and the student's performance is less than the 15th percentile and/or less than 67% of benchmark proficiency.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Data-Based Decision Making**.
The student's individualized or small-group interventions were reviewed, revised, and/or discontinued based on the student's performance and progress with 2 – 5 data points. Performance less than 25th percentile.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

Administrator/Designee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fidelity Checklist
Tier III

Student: _____ **Teacher:** _____

Grade: _____ **Age:**_____ **School:** _____

Tier III direct, targeted, and intensive instruction was provided to the student with fidelity.

___Yes ___No **Evidence of Tier III Intensive Needs-Based Learning**
The student has received targeted intensive, scientific, research-based interventions for 12-18 weeks.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Fidelity of Intervention**
The intervention(s) was (were) implemented with fidelity for this student (including core curriculum, supplemental curriculum, and strategies).
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Progress Monitoring Data**
The student's progress was monitored with repeated measures of the student performance, which was reported to parents. Assessment data was compared to peers, and the student's scores are below the 10th percentile or in the lowest 67% of the grade level peer group.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

___Yes ___No **Data-Based Decision Making**
The student's individualized or small-group interventions were reviewed, revised, and/or discontinued based on the student's performance and progress with at least 12 weekly probes.
If no, describe actions to improve fidelity:

Administrator/Designee Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

6.3 Team Guidance: Data Collection on Instruction and Interventions

- ☐ Student was provided with appropriate instruction in general education with a qualified teacher
- ☐ Results of repeated measures of student performance at reasonable intervals during classroom instruction were provided to parents and reviewed by the team
- ☐ Academic interventions to provide supplementary instruction were documented, with attention to the fidelity of the efforts to impact student achievement
- ☐ Student is not achieving at proficiency with grade level content standards (as measured by state assessments and/or district benchmark assessments)
- ☐ Health, vision, hearing factors do not explain normative deficits or classroom performance deficits
- ☐ Environmental, cultural, economic factors do not explain the achievement performance deficits
- ☐ Multiple measures of achievement were considered

INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTION DOCUMENTATION SHEET

STUDENT:	**TEACHER:**	**DATE:**
STUDENT ID:	**SCHOOL:**	**REFERRAL DATE:**
GRADE:	**INTERVENTION START DATE:**	**INTERVENTION REVIEW DATE:**
What is the presenting concern? (State in specific and measurable terms)		
What data supports the existence of the problem? (Baseline data)		
What is the goal? (To be stated in specific and measurable terms)		
Describe the intervention to be attempted.		
List specific objectives of this intervention.	**Describe the activities for each objective involved.**	**List the specific measure of progress.**
CONDUCTED BY:	**NAME:**	**POSITION:**

INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTION PLAN	STUDENT NAME:	
TIMESPAN:	**BEGIN DATE:**	**END DATE:**

SCHEDULE FOR DELIVERY OF INTERVENTION:

Number of sessions:

Length of sessions:

Interval between sessions (e.g., Daily, Number of Days):

Resources/Materials/Approach:

Number of students in intervention group:

How will the implementation of the intervention be monitored?:

Progress Monitoring Checks to be Completed:

Frequency of Progress Monitoring:

Evaluation of success of intervention. Attach data charts from intervention. (Select from below).

☐	☐	
Planned intervention was successful in meeting child's needs.	**Planned intervention was not successful in meeting the child's needs.**	**Planned intervention was not successful in meeting the child's needs.**
This intervention will be continued in the current setting.	**Another instructional intervention will be conducted to attempt to meet child's needs.**	**Referral for evaluation for special education is considered due to:**
Date ☐	**Date**	**Date**

Signatures:

INTERVENTION TEAM FIDELITY CHECKLIST

Student: **School:**

Date:

1. The baseline data in the area(s) of concern was described in specific, measurable terms meaningful for the intervention?	Yes	No
2. The goal(s) for the student were described in measurable terms on the written intervention plan?	Yes	No
3. A method for measuring progress toward the goal was described in writing?	Yes	No
4. An intervention to improve student performance was designed in the form of a written intervention plan?	Yes	No
5. At least one person is assigned to SUPPORT the teacher in implementing the intervention plan?	Yes	No
6. The teacher was provided the time, materials, and training to implement the intervention plan?	Yes	No
7. An implementation integrity measure is available for checking how the intervention was implemented?	Yes	No
8. The parent of the student receiving intervention is aware and has the opportunity to be involved in the intervention process?	Yes	No
9. A date for the review of the intervention plan and progress monitoring data was specified in writing?	Yes	No
10. The student was in attendance in school and engaged in the intervention activities?	Yes	No
11. All parties followed the written intervention plan? If no, describe how the instruction deviated from the intervention plan.	Yes	No

Student Data Summary

District

Date: _____ Student Number: _____

Student: _____Gender: ____ DOB: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

School: _____Grade: _____Teacher/Counselor: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____Relationship: _____Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____Relationship: _____Phone: _____

School History
Date of Entry into School: _____ Years in School: _____

Where did the student attend school? If the student moved, in what grades?
Elementary:

Middle Grades:

High School:

Family Information
With whom does the student live? (e.g., both parents, guardian, siblings)

How does student spend time after school? (e.g., day care, sports/activities, work)

Medical Information

Date of last vision exam: _____ Results: _____

Date of last hearing screening: _____ Results: _____
Prosthetic devices prescribed:

- ☐ Glasses Usage: All class Work _____ Specific Tasks _____
- ☐ Hearing Aids Usage: All Class Work _____ Specific Tasks _____
- ☐ Other _____ Usage: All Class Work _____ Specific Tasks _____

Medications:
Reason: _____Name: _____Dosage: _____Frequency:_____
Reason: _____Name: _____Dosage: _____Frequency:_____
Chronic illnesses or allergies:_____

Special Education Summary
For currently identified Special Education students:

Initial MET/IEP: _____ Current MET/IEP: _____
Eligibility: _____
Current services: TC ____ SSW ____ TSLI/SLP ____ OT ____ PT ____
Current placement: _____
Assistive Technology: _____

Academic Information

Present Skill Levels:
Current Reading: _____ Assessment: _____
Current Math: _____ Assessment: _____
Current Written Language: _____ Assessment: _____

Education History
Describe Academic Supports: _____
ELL/Bilingual: _____
Other: _____

Testing Data:
Circle State Assessment: MEAP MEAP-Access MI-Access
Accommodations? ___No ___Yes, Describe:

Reading	_____	Math	_____
Writing	_____	Science	_____
ELA	_____	Social Studies	_____

District Benchmark Assessments:
Reading: _____
Math: _____
Writing: _____

Most Recent Academic Grades:

	Letter Grade	Instructional*		Letter Grade	Instructional*
Reading:	_____	_____	Social Studies:	_____	_____
Math:	_____	_____	Science:	_____	_____
Spelling:	_____	_____	Health/PE:	_____	_____
English:	_____	_____	Other: _____		_____

*Refers to Instructional Level

Teacher Observations

For each area: Rate the student in comparison to classmates using the scale from 1-5
In Lowest 10% = 1; Below Average = 2; Average = 3; Above Average = 4; In Highest 10% = 5

	Rating		Rating		Rating
Completes assignments	_____	Functions independently	_____	Basic reading	_____
Motivation and effort	_____	Self-help	_____	Basic math	_____
Follows directions	_____	Sensitive to social cues	_____	Written language	_____
Follows rules	_____	Appropriate affect	_____	Listening	_____
Adult relationships	_____	Concentrates in class	_____	Comprehension	_____
Peer relationships	_____	Fine motor	_____	Speech articulation	_____
Health	_____	Gross motor	_____	Spoken language	_____

Teacher comments:

Discipline Record

Number of discipline reports: _____
Number of office referrals: _____ Reasons: _____
Number of Suspensions:
In-school: _____Reasons: _____
Out of school: _____Reasons: _____

Exclusion Factors

Environmental, Cultural or Economic – Check all factors that apply to the student. Use available records, interviews with parents and other resources to obtain data.

Environmental Factors

____Limited experiential background
____Irregular attendance
____Moved often
____Home responsibilities interfering with learning activities

Cultural Factors

____Limited experiences in majority based culture
____Limited involvement in clubs, activities, etc
____Live in isolated area
____Family education expectations

Economic Factors

____Homeless
____Family challenges to afford enrichment materials and/or experiences
____Student is eligible for Title I services

Are the above checked items compelling enough to indicate the student's educational performance is primarily due to environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage? Explain:

Limited English Proficiency
How long has the student spoken English? _____
Is there a language other than English spoken by the student? _____
Is there a language other than English spoken in the home? _____

ELPA: Total Score _____ Reading____Writing _____Speaking____ Listening ____
Does the ESL teacher indicate that the student is making progress in learning the English language? ___Yes ___No
If no, explain:

Motor Impairment
Does the student experience any motor limitations that impact educational performance?
If yes, explain further with summary of parent and medical reports.

Motivation: Please answer each question. If No, please explain:

Does the student seek assistance from teachers, peers, others? ___Yes ____ No

Does the parent report that efforts are made at home to complete homework or study assignments? ___Yes ___No

Is the student making an effort to learn? ___Yes ___ No

Are the student's achievement scores consistent with the student's grades? ___Yes ____ No

Situational Trauma

Has the student experienced a recent trauma (i.e. parents divorced, illness of student or family member, death of family member, serious accident or injury, financial crisis, crime victim, etc.)? ___Yes ___No If yes, explain:

Is there any other situation that could be creating stress or emotional upsets for this student? ___Yes ___ No If yes, explain:

Has there been a significant change in the student's classroom performance within a short period of time (6-12 months)? ___Yes ___ No If yes, explain:

.

Section 7

Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE)

…a full and individual evaluation is conducted for each student being considered for special education and related services. The evaluation will…determine…
…if the student is a "student with a disability; and
… the educational needs of the student.

-IDEA 2004

7.1 Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE)

A Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) must be conducted to determine if an individual is entitled to special education services. Conducting a Full and Individual Evaluation is a continuation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) or problem solving process. The purpose of the FIE is to determine the educational interventions that are required to resolve the presenting problem, behaviors of concern, or suspected disability. Information collected during the RTI process is used along with additional assessment to assist in identifying effective interventions for a student experiencing difficulties.

A recommendation is made for the Full and Individual Evaluation when it is evident that additional resources and special education services may be needed to resolve the presenting concerns with student learning. The parents must give written permission before an FIE can be conducted. An FIE may be requested under any of the following circumstances:

- Academic and behavioral performance patterns demonstrate lack of adequate response to intervention

- Parents have requested an evaluation or the team suspects a disability.

The Full and Individual Evaluation is completed by a multidisciplinary team using a variety of assessment tools and data sources. The multidisciplinary team consists of parents, the general education teacher or a teacher qualified to teach the student's grade or age, and other relevant personnel who can interpret the educational implications of the evaluation results. Results from outside sources, including medical or mental health reports, should be considered but the team is not obligated to use or follow these recommendations when making educational decisions. The team will be responsible for reviewing the results of all previous interventions and will define any additional assessments which may be needed in order to determine eligibility for special education services.

The team should not rely on cut scores from standardized test data as the sole determining criteria. Rather, the team must carefully review all evidence from multiple sources over time to make a thoughtful, ethical, and valid determination of disability.

A variety of assessment tools will be used to provide information regarding the individual's educational performance. No single assessment tool or measure can be used as sole criteria for determining eligibility. Assessment tools and measures must be technically sound, valid, reliable, current, and administered by trained and knowledgeable diagnostic personnel in accordance with any instructions provided.

The following Full and Individual Evaluation Data Matrix was developed to support the team in identifying and collecting necessary information to provide a thorough and complete assessment to make a determination of eligibility. Each of the components aligns to requirements of documented evidence to inform the recommendation of the team. The recommendations of the team must then lead to recommendations for relevant, necessary, and appropriate educational interventions.

Table 4. Specific Learning Disability Full and Individual Evaluation Data Matrix			
Multiple Data Sources	Data Available for ALL Students	Classroom Data Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation	Specialized Evidence Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation
Required by Federal Rules	**State Assessment** *(Required)* ***Does the student achieve at State standards for grade?*** MEAP/MI-Access Circle: Proficiency Level Reading 1 2 3 4 Writing 1 2 3 4 Math 1 2 3 4 *Non-tested MEAP Grades Option: Review most current year OR Rely on District Data*	**Classroom Observation** *(required for ALL initial evaluations, REED determines need for Reevaluation observation)* ***Is the learning deficit observed by an independent rater in the classroom in which instruction is delivered?*** ☐ In area of referral concern ☐ Completed by team member Observation of learning difficulty noted in: ☐ Learner behaviors ☐ Work samples/products ☐ Difference from peer in meeting class expectation	**Exclusionary Factors** *(Required)* ***Are there other factors that explain the learning deficit?*** ☐ English as Second language ELPA and Performance Data ☐ Adaptive behaviors < 2 standard deviations below mean ☐ Health/Medical ☐ Sensory: Vision, Hearing ☐ Other handicapping conditions ☐ Environmental Factors ☐ Cultural Difference ☐ Economic Factors ☐ Limited access to appropriate instruction

Multiple Data Sources	Data Available for ALL Students	Classroom Data Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation	Specialized Evidence Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation
Multiple Measures of Achievement	**Repeated Measures of Student Learning** *(Required)* ***What is the learning improvement trend for the student with instruction?*** □ Progress Monitoring Data <10 percentile AND/OR □ Defined by District curriculum assessment method (i.e., DRA, Guided Reading) <50% Proficiency/Grade Repeated measures must be administered at evenly-spaced intervals, such as once per week over a reasonable interval, such as a 9 - 12 weeks or as defined by the District.	**Classroom Assessment Data In Achievement Area(s)** *(Highly Recommended)* ***What is the learning level of the student when compared to expectations for the age/grade of the general education program?*** District defined assessments that include expected performance levels for grade/age. Examples: Benchmark tests End of course exams Course entry exams MLPP levels Unit tests	**Normative Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses** *(Required if using Pattern of Strength and Weakness Option)* ***What is the evidence of a pattern of normative specific deficits in a profile of a student with normative strength?*** □ Pattern of normative deficit for academic and cognitive skills that are linked by empirical evidence or validated logic. □ Pattern analysis includes identification of normative strengths in ability among cognitive and academic skills.

Multiple Data Sources	Data Available for ALL Students	Classroom Data Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation	Specialized Evidence Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation
Other Information Sources to Inform the Team Decision	**Parent Input** *(Required)* ***How does the parent's report describe the student's development, life experiences and the learning patterns observed in the home?*** Possible Areas of Concern: ☐ Developmental Concerns ☐ School/Learning Concerns ☐ Behavioral Concerns ☐ Social Concerns Describe:	**Teacher Input on Learning Behaviors and Progress** *(Required)* ***How does the teacher's report describe the instructional program, the student and the learning patterns?*** Information to consider: ☐ Student Learning Behaviors ☐ Student Engagement ☐ Instructional Program ☐ Differentiated Instruction ☐ Specialized Instruction Opportunities Describe:	**Other Evaluation Reports** *(Recommended for team consideration, when available)* ***What does other evaluation information tell us about the student?*** ☐ Previous evaluations ☐ Reports from other sources ☐ Previous specialized services

Multiple Data Sources	Data Available for ALL Students	Classroom Data Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation	Specialized Evidence Collected Prior and During Full and Individual Evaluation
Instructional Evidence to Support the Team Decision	**Report Card Grades** *(Team data review consideration)* ***How is the student succeeding in current classroom instruction?*** What do progress reports indicate regarding changes in performance over time? Does the student meet classroom expectations to achieve average and above grades? In what areas does the student obtain below average or failing grades? How do teacher comments inform the understanding of the student learning and instructional needs?	**Documentation of Instructional Intervention Delivered with Fidelity** *(Required if using Response to Intervention Option)* ***Was the student given opportunities to acquire skills using a process of instructional interventions?*** ☐ Interventions were delivered with fidelity ☐ Documentation of intervention goals and methods ☐ Intervention trials for a minimum of 9 weeks for each tier ☐ Data points include 9– 12 probes per intervention trial	**Additional Achievement Tests/Probes** *(Recommended)* ***Are normative achievement deficits evidenced with other measures of achievement?*** What additional tests within the skill areas will inform the determination of disability? How will additional achievement data inform the development of educational plans for the student?

Section 8

Classroom Observation Guidelines

"All of us are watchers – of television, of time clocks, of traffic on the freeway—but few are observers. Everyone is looking, not many are seeing."

- Peter M. Leschak

8.1 Classroom Observation Guidelines

The Law

(a) The public agency must ensure that the child is observed in the child's learning environment (including the regular classroom setting) to document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.
(b) The group described in Sec. 300.306(a)(1), in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, must decide to—

(1) Use information from an observation in routine classroom instruction and monitoring of the child's performance that was done before the child was referred for an evaluation; or

(2) Have at least one member of the group described in Sec. 300.306(a)(1) conduct an observation of the child's academic performance in the regular classroom after the child has been referred for an evaluation and parental consent, consistent with Sec. 300.300(a), is obtained.

(c) In the case of a child of less than school age or out of school, a group member must observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child of that age.
(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3; 1401(30); 1414(b)(6))
From IDEA 2004: Sec. 300.310

Guidance on Classroom Observations

The direct classroom observation should serve the purpose of substantiating the academic deficits determined by the Review of Existing Evaluation Data, referral form and any areas that may be revealed during formal assessment. A systematic classroom observation is both quantitative and qualitative. The student's physical placement in the classroom setting and the physical design of the classroom should be noted.

In a systematic classroom observation the skills should be assessed in the areas of:

Work Habits include participation in classroom activities, volunteering, organization, assignment completion, proficiency in the subject matter, eye contact, independence, time needed to get started on an assignment, prompting required by the teacher, time needed to complete work, and ease of transition from one task to another.

Speaking Skills include clarity and fluency of speech, articulation, and the ability to communicate ideas logically and cogently.

Listening Skills are following directions, needing repeated or additional directions, asking for clarification, and preferring auditory instruction over other sensory modes.

Behavior Habits such as restlessness, poor concentration, short attention span, distractibility, poor motivation, responsiveness to instruction, and interpersonal interactions with peers and adults are important to understand how they may impact academic performance.

Academic Performance Observations may establish the difficulty level of instruction is at a level of frustration, instructional level, or independent level (mastery). Academic performance observations may note accuracy in comparison to class standards or peer performance. Observations of student errors and questions may inform of student fluency in applying academic skills to instructional tasks.

There are several types of observational procedures that an examiner may use to collect information. The types of observations may include:

Rating Scales Charting
Methods Checklists
Narrative Descriptions

At times it may be necessary to do multiple classroom observations to ensure student's academic performance is validated. When the student is involved in producing work during the observation it may be necessary to analyze the assignment at a later time. After analyzing the assignment, the observer can accurately complete the observation form. The observation data form becomes part of the verifying documentation of the student's academic performance for the M.E.T. report.

A Classroom Observation is Required for Every Initial Evaluation

Classroom Observation Record

Date: **Name:**

School: **Teacher:**

Time Observation Began: **Time Observation Ended:**

Observation Area of Concern	Classroom Organization
Check area(s) of concern from REED ☐ Basic Reading Skill ☐ Reading Fluency ☐ Reading Comprehension ☐ Written Expression ☐ Mathematics Calculation ☐ Mathematics Concepts ☐ Oral Expression ☐ Listening Comprehension **Describe the Lesson:**	**Location of Observation:** **Classroom Climate (**Structure, control, noise level, engaged learners, etc.): Check all that apply: **Learning Activity:** ☐ Teacher Presentation ☐ Whole Group Recitation ☐ Small Group Work ☐ Individual Seat Work ☐ Partners **Student's Desk Location:**

READING: Basic Reading Skills, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency Skills

- ☐ Age appropriate reading skills
- ☐ Confuses similar-looking letters and numbers or similar looking words (i.e., beard, bread)
- ☐ Has difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words
- ☐ Frequently loses place while reading
- ☐ Reverses letter order in words (ie, saw/was)
- ☐ Demonstrates poor memory for printed words
- ☐ Reads slowly
- ☐ Has trouble naming letters
- ☐ Has problems associating letters and sounds, understanding the difference between sounds in words or blending sounds into words
- ☐ Guesses at unfamiliar words rather than using word analysis skills
- ☐ Substitutes or leaves out words while reading
- ☐ Has poor retention of new vocabulary
- ☐ Dislikes and avoids reading or reads reluctantly
- ☐ Has weak comprehension of ideas and themes

Notes:

WRITTEN LANGUAGE
☐ Age Appropriate ☐ Writing is messy and incomplete with many cross-outs and erasures ☐ Has difficulty remembering shapes of letters and numbers ☐ Frequently reverses letters, numbers and symbols ☐ Uses uneven spacing between letters and words, and has trouble staying "on the line" ☐ Copies inaccurately (i.e., confuses similar-looking letters and numbers) ☐ Spells poorly and inconsistently (i.e., the same word appears differently other places in the same document ☐ Has difficulty proofreading and self-correcting work ☐ Fails to develop ideas in writing so written work is incomplete and too brief
Notes:

MAMATHEMATICS: Math Calculation, Math Computation
☐ Age Appropriate ☐ Has difficulty with simple counting and one-to-one correspondence between numbers symbols and items/objects ☐ Has difficulty learning strategic counting principles (i.e., by 2, 5, 10, 100) ☐ Poorly aligns numbers resulting in computation errors ☐ Has difficulty estimating quantity (i.e., quantity, value) ☐ Has difficulty with comparisons (i.e., less than, greater than) ☐ Has trouble telling time ☐ Has trouble conceptualizing the passage of time ☐ Has difficulty counting rapidly or making calculations Notes: ☐ Has trouble interpreting graphs and charts

Listening Skills	Speaking Skills
☐ Appropriate language comprehension ☐ Appears to learn from listening ☐ Follows directions to locate materials ☐ Follows directions to engage in tasks ☐ Repeats directions accurately ☐ Needs extra directions ☐ Frustration with assignment ☐ Difficulty locating pictures, objects, letters, words	☐ Appropriate verbal language in class ☐ Volunteers to answer questions ☐ Answers with logically sequenced ideas ☐ Speaks in full sentences ☐ Uses appropriate vocabulary ☐ Listeners ask student to repeat statements ☐ Difficulty relating ideas ☐ Mispronounces words ☐ Loses place when speaking ☐ Confuses words with others that sound similar ☐ Difficulty re-telling
Notes:	Notes:

Work Habits	
☐ Participates with class ☐ Volunteers to read orally ☐ Volunteers to answer question(s) ☐ Eye Contact with teacher/peers ☐ Materials on desk/Ready for lesson ☐ Gets to work promptly ☐ Works independently ☐ Works appropriately in group activities ☐ Appears motivated to learn ☐ Completes homework	☐ Does not contribute to class ☐ Slow to respond when called on ☐ Poor posture ☐ Does not look at teacher ☐ Disorganized ☐ Needs extra time ☐ Does not finish assignment(s) ☐ Rushes through tasks ☐ Messy
Notes:	

Behavior Habits	
☐ Attention span appropriate for age and activity ☐ Restless, inattentive during written work ☐ Restless, inattentive during lecture ☐ Off task ☐ Easily distracted ☐ Difficulty following directions ☐ Unable to keep place on page ☐ Unable to keep pace with class ☐ Written work messy ☐ Difficulty copying ☐ Out of seat ☐ Interrupts others ☐ Inappropriate comments to teacher/peers	Time Sample Example: Identify 1 behavior of concern. Every 20 seconds, record if the behavior did occur with +. If behavior did not occur, record a 0. Behavior:_____
Notes:	

Additional Observations
Ex.. Did observations significantly differ from peers? Substitute teacher? etc.

Section 9

Exclusionary Clause Considerations

…must include a statement of…the documentation of the group concerning the effects of a visual, hearing, or motor disability; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency on the child's achievement level…

-IDEA 2004

9.1 Exclusionary Clause Considerations

Exclusionary Clause and Differential Diagnosis

The MET/IEP team may not identify a child as having a specific learning disability (SLD) if the learning problem is primarily the result of:

- A visual, hearing or motor disability
- Cognitive impairment
- Emotional impairment
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage

However, a student for whom these factor(s) apply, could also be appropriately identified as having a specific learning disability. The issue is one of "primary cause" for the learning problem(s). With the changes to SLD criteria, serious consideration of these factors has become even more important than in the past.

The effects on the determination of SLD cannot be considered in the same manner for all the exclusionary factors. Vision, hearing, and motor disabilities, as well as Cognitive Impairment and Emotional Impairment are all special education eligibility categories. The team must determine whether the **primary** reason for learning problems is the presence of one of these other eligibilities or SLD. It is possible for a team to conclude that SLD is the primary disability, even if the child, for example, also has a visual impairment.

> *It is critical to keep in mind that special education eligibility under any disability category entitles the child's special education needs to be addressed through the IEP, whether or not those needs are typically associated with the identified disability.*

Vision, Hearing or Motor Disability

As with some of the other "exclusionary factors," these disabilities may co-exist with specific learning disabilities and must be addressed in instructional planning if they are present. The mere presence of one of these disabilities should not preclude a determination of SLD as the primary disability. The determination may require an evaluation by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, otolaryngologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist and/or other medical staff. Results of vision/hearing screenings and any follow-up evaluations should be included in the evaluation team's written report.

Cognitive Impairment (CI)

This is probably the one "exclusionary factor" that would not typically be thought to co-exist with SLD. Rather, all academic learning difficulties would be attributed to the condition of cognitive impairment, or limited intellectual capacity.

Criteria for cognitive impairment include demonstration of all of the following behavioral characteristics:

- Development at a rate at or below approximately 2 standard deviations below the mean as determined through intellectual assessment.
- Scores approximately within the lowest 6 percentiles on a standardized test in reading and arithmetic.
- Lack of development primarily in the cognitive domain.
- Impairment in adaptive behavior.
- Adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Emotional Impairment (EI)

Specific learning disabilities often co-occur with emotional, behavioral, and attention disorders (Fletcher et al., 2007). Determining which condition is primary is often a difficult task. In some cases, social or emotional difficulties may be secondary to the lack of school success. In others, the academic underachievement may be a result of mental illness or ADHD. Specifically, math and written expression disorders are especially common in children with ADHD, presumably because of the predominant role of executive functioning skills such as strategy use and procedural learning (Barkley, 1997; Fletcher et al., 2002).

Environmental, Cultural or Economic Disadvantage

Cultural, economic and environmental factors are more complex and, thus, more difficult to address in examining the **primary** cause of poor achievement. Basically, these conditions do potentially influence the development of cognitive and linguistic skills that are necessary for academic learning and can co-exist in specific learning disabilities (Fletcher et al., 2007).

Limited English Proficiency

ESEA uses the term "Limited English Proficient" (LEP) to refer to students in the process of acquiring the English language. These students are also at times referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Recent professional practice, in response to issues related to culturally responsive practices and a shift away from deficit theories, recommends the use of the term English Language Learners (ELL). Therefore, this document will use the most recent and appropriate terminology in lieu of all others.

The term *English Language Learner* includes students whose conversational English may seem adequate but struggle with English academic settings (Gersten & Baker, 2000). However, it is recognized that the term English Language Learners does not depict a homogeneous group. For English Language Learners, second language acquisition is a lengthy, developmental process, whereby students whose native language is not English acquire listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the English language. At the same time, these students must also master content area instruction typically delivered in English.

According to Cummins' theory of language acquisition, there is a vast difference between the development of a native, or first, language, and the learning of a second language. In order for a student to become proficient in a second language, both basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)

and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) need to be developed. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) represents the basis for a student's academic success, but it may take anywhere from five to seven years, or longer, to master.
Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), in contrast, are usually attained within the first two years of exposure to a second language, and are characterized by superficial oral language skills.

Erroneously, many teachers assume that because an English Language Learner can speak English, they should also be able to complete academic tasks in English. However, as specified above, this may not be the case. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is a complex process that is impacted by previous schooling, age, and cognitive experiences. Students who have two to three years of schooling in their native language may require five to seven years to obtain academic proficiency in the second language, while students who have never received native language schooling may take seven to ten years to become proficient. In practical terms, children in the 8 to 11 year-old age group, who acquired solid literacy skills in their first language are more likely to become proficient (CALP) within the five to seven year mark. Conversely, younger children (i.e. preschool population) that have not had an opportunity to fully develop their native language will generally take longer to become proficient (CALP).

In the process of second language acquisition, a further complication may occur: that is the regression of the native language due to a lack of continued exposure to more complex concepts in the native language, and the introduction of a second language before the native language is fully developed. In this instance, there may appear to be a lack of proficiency not only in the second language, but also in the first. If a child is not competent in his/her native language, it will affect his/her competence in the second language. Native language loss may occur even while being used in the home. Therefore, a child's proficiency in their first language may regress, while lacking proficiency in the second language, due to limited exposure.

According to the federal government, an English Language Learner is an individual who:

- is 3 to 21 years of age; and
- is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school; and was not born in the United States, or
- whose native language is a language other than English;
- is a Native American, Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
- who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- **whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual –**
    - **the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments**
    - **the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or**
    - **the opportunity to participate fully in society.**

  [Public Law 107-110, Title IX, Part A, Sec. 9101, (25)]

As it is readily apparent in the above definition, English Language Learners may display characteristics of academic deficits, when measured with comparable methods to the processes that might identify a student with a specific learning disability. Because of this, it is extremely important to ensure that

English Language Learners are provided with appropriate instruction, that the methods of assessment are appropriate, and that a thorough review of information about the student's prior learning opportunities has been completed in order to allow for robust determinations.

In Michigan, and in order to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs), six levels of English language proficiency are used, to more accurately describe student proficiency in listening, speaking, reading (and comprehension), and writing skills. The instrument used to determine the level of each student's proficiency in English as a second language is the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA).

An English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) score below Level 3 indicates the student has not yet acquired the necessary level of language proficiency (CALP). Therefore, language acquisition cannot be ruled out as a factor involved in the student's learning difficulties. Students with English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) scores of Level 4 and above are considered proficient in English.

EXCLUSIONARY FACTORS WORKSHEET

Specific Learning Disability

Each factor must be ruled out as the PRIMARY FACTOR for the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum.	**Yes**	**No**
1. Lack of instruction in essential components of reading and math (or appropriate learning Experiences).		
Is lack of instruction in reading and math the primary factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
2. Limited English Proficiency		
Answer the following questions:		
• Is there a language other than English spoken by this student?		
• Is there a language other than English spoken by the student's home?		
• Are there any specific dialect or cultural influences that would affect the student's ability to speak or understand English?		
Is Limited English Proficiency the primary factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
3. Cognitive Impairment		
Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude cognitive impairment as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.		
• Cognitive score(s) _____ Is this student's cognitive profile equally depressed in all areas?		
If yes to above, Is Cognitive Impairment the PRIMARY factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
4. Emotional Impairment		
Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude emotional impairment as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.		
• Does the student exhibit emotional difficulties that interfere with learning?		
• Does the student have a medical history and/or school history of emotional difficulties?		
• If either are yes above, has a Functional Behavior Assessment been conducted?		
Is Emotional Impairment the PRIMARY factor for the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
5. Vision, Hearing, or Motor Impairments		
Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude vision, hearing, or motor impairments as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits. Is there documentation that would indicate the following area(s) are determinant factor(s) for this student's academic deficits?		
• Vision Screening		

• Hearing Screening		
• Does the student have a history of significantly delayed motor development?		
• Is there a medical diagnosis for a motor impairment that would affect the student's ability to learn access general education instruction?		
• Have any physical or motor impairments been observed or assessed?		
Is Sensory Impairment the PRIMARY factor for the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
6. Environmental, Cultural, or Economic Disadvantage		
Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.		
Is there documentation that Environmental, Cultural or Economic Disadvantage is the PRIMARY factor for the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
7. Motivational Factors		
Answer the following questions:		
• Does the student attempt classroom assignments and/or homework?		
○ If no, is the student's performance on grade level during classroom activities?		
• Are group achievement scores consistent with the student's grades?		
Does information gathered indicate that lack of motivation is the PRIMARY factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		
8. Situational Trauma		
Answer the following questions:		
• Has the student's academic performance fallen dramatically within the last 6-12 months?		
• Is there knowledge of any situations within the student's family that would contribute to a drop in academic performance?		
Does information gathered indicate situational trauma is the PRIMARY factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum		
9. General Education Interventions		
Has the student been provided with repeated assessment of achievement following researched-based interventions?		
If no, can lack of general education interventions be considered the PRIMARY factor in the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum?		

Please comment on of the Nine (9) areas that were answered YES to being considered the primary factor for the inability to progress in the general education curriculum :

Section 10

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

…the child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards or intellectual development…

-IDEA 2004

10.1 Discussion on Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses
At § 300.309(a)(2)(ii), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations identify a pattern of strengths and weaknesses as an option in determining Specific Learning Disability eligibility. The Rules permit local districts to use this option. The MDE does **not** mandate any specific process to determine a pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Any determination of Specific Learning Disability requires a full and individual evaluation according to the evaluation procedures in the federal regulations at § 300.301 – § 300.311, including those particular to a student suspected of having a Specific Learning Disability in § 300.307 – § 300.311.

The "Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses" (PSW) Approach
In review of research on methods of SLD identification, along with the scientific advances that have been documented with regards to cognitive processes and academic difficulties, we believe that sole reliance on the ability-achievement discrepancy model is problematic for reasons previously stated. Those students who do not respond to scientifically validated and researched-based instruction may need a full and individual evaluation of academic and cognitive/intellectual functioning. Thus, a balanced approach to the evaluation of learning disability within the context of a full and individual evaluation should incorporate not only historical performance data (e.g., teacher based, work samples, benchmark assessments), but also, standardized cognitive and academic assessment.

The approach in these guidelines for a comprehensive framework follows established principles and standards for valid assessment and incorporates a contemporary and theory-based operational definition of a specific learning disability. This approach will also allow for alternative research-based methods to identify and intervene with students with SLD. So, this paradigm will integrate accepted concepts and research about learning disability with theories about cognitive and academic functioning in a comprehensive framework for making decisions about LD eligibility. These operational definitions provide an inherently practical method for SLD identification that carries the potential for increased agreement about the validity of SLD classification (Kavale, 2005). It is designed to look at abilities/processes that are most directly related to the development of academic skills and thus is the best predictor of those skills. This model is specifically designed to determine if

A balanced approach to the evaluation of Specific Learning Disabilities within the context of a full and individual evaluation should incorporate curriculum-based performance data, standardized cognitive and achievement data, and multiple sources of information about the student, the instruction, and the other circumstances that impact learning.

there is a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in a student's academic and cognitive profile that can account for the child's learning pattern. A specific learning disability is determined if there is a conceptual and empirical link between academic deficit and underlying cognitive processes or abilities. This should be consistent with referral concerns and other data (e.g., CBM, teacher report).

Specifically, this pattern of strengths and weaknesses paradigm offers an array of standardized data to *evaluate* a profile to determine if there are c*onceptually and empirically related cognitive and academic weakness(es)* that exist in an *otherwise normal ability/processing profile.*

Principles of Pattern of Strength and Weakness (PSW)

There are several "patterns of strengths and weaknesses" models that have been developed to evaluate students for learning disability. Each of these PSW models follows four general principles.

1. A global IQ is deemphasized in favor of pattern of strengths and weaknesses.
2. A SLD pattern of cognitive and academic strengths and weaknesses should be seen within an otherwise normal ability profile.
3. Academic deficits and cognitive deficits should be conceptually and/or empirically linked.
4. Most cognitive abilities that do not relate to the area of academic concern are average or above.

10.2 The Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory

As stated earlier, the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) model of cognitive abilities is the empirically based, valid and measurable construct for the analysis of learning abilities. The Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory classifies cognitive skills within seven clusters of abilities that demonstrate moderate to highly significant correlations to academic achievement skills. The seven CHC areas are defined:

Comprehension-Knowledge: The breadth and depth of knowledge including verbal communication and information.

Fluid Reasoning: The ability to reason and solve problems that often involve unfamiliar information or procedures. Fluid reasoning abilities are manifested in the reorganization, transformation, and extrapolation of information.

Auditory Processing: The ability to discriminate, analyze, and synthesize auditory stimuli. Auditory processing skills are related to phonological awareness.

Long-Term Retrieval: The ability to store information efficiently and retrieve it later through association.

Short-Term Memory: The ability to hold information in immediate awareness and then use it within a few seconds, also related to working memory.

Processing Speed: The speed and efficiency in performing automatic or very simple cognitive tasks.

Visual-Spatial Thinking: Spatial orientation, the ability to analyze and synthesize visual stimuli, and the ability to hold and manipulate mental images.

Why Use the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory?

Students use their whole brains to learn and we are interested in examining how the cognitive and achievement abilities are consistent with one another. For example, the skills that contribute to learning to read include auditory discrimination, short term memory, long term memory, processing speed and basic reading abilities. Instead of looking for a student's "true IQ" to predict learning, we will examine the learning skills that are consistent with the achievement skills students learn in school.

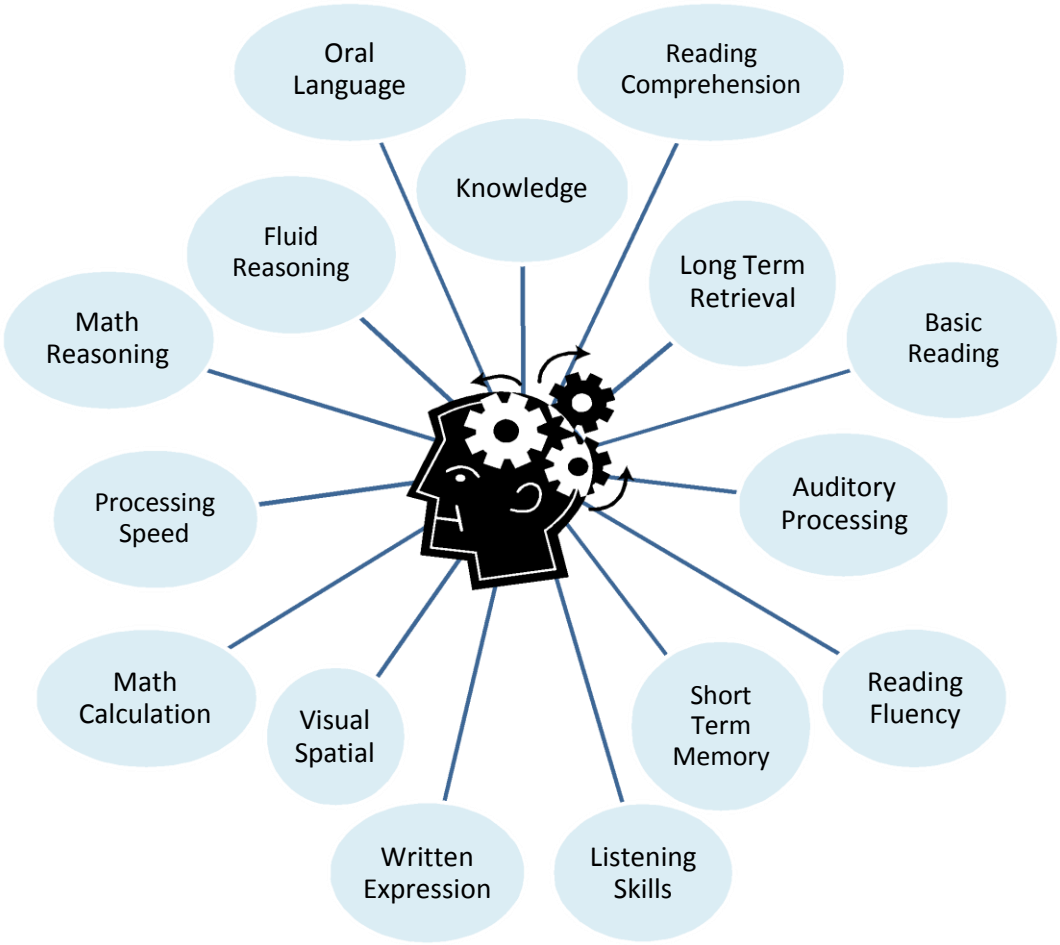


Figure 4. Cognitive and academic skills work together in the brain.

In the new model for SLD identification, we will look for consistencies among cognitive and academic skills. Consistencies are identified among the skills that cluster together as weaknesses and the skills that cluster together as strengths. The consistencies among skills are then examined relative to a normal ability profile.

10.3 The Aptitude-Achievement Consistency Model

The **Aptitude-Achievement Consistency Model** proposed by Flanagan, Ortiz & Alfonso (2007)is based on the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory and used in the determination of Specific Learning Disabilities.

> This model documents low achievement in a specific area; identifies a deficit in a cognitive ability that is linked by research to the academic weakness; and provides a method to determine that most cognitive abilities are average or above.
>
> This model is based on Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) intelligence theory. The CHC theory has a vast research base. Data sets from over half a million administrations of different cognitive and neuropsychological tests were used to determine what the actual specific human cognitive abilities are. Instead of relying on opinion or observation, the CHC theory has developed a factor structure based on fifty years of research on all kinds of intelligence tests. When using this model, practitioners are not limited to any one test or group of tests. Based on presenting concerns, tests are selected to probe cognitive and academic skills.
>
> The aptitude-achievement consistency model has particular utility for discriminating between cases of borderline intellectual functioning (and mild mental retardation) and specific learning disability. The model discriminates between normally developing English Language Learners (ELL) students and ELL students with specific learning disability (SLD).

Rationale for a New Operational Definition for the Assessment of SLD

The psychological practice of specific learning disability identification has relied historically on methods and procedures that have virtually no inherent reliability, much less validity. Practitioners have often searched for discrepancies wherever they may exist.

Analysis of intra-individual differences is fraught with both psychometric problems and errors in logic. Most individuals have significant variability in their profile of cognitive ability/processing scores. Significant test variation in performance is normal. The expectation of a flat profile is unwarranted. And there has been no standard or guide regarding what types of scores should be compared. A discrepancy between two scores of any kind is neither necessary nor sufficient to establish the presence of a specific learning disability. Differences that are infrequent in the general population are often prescribed a tremendous significance in evaluations of suspected learning disability.

The operational definition of SLD proposed by Flanagan, et al. (2007) requires an evaluation of the relationship between specific academic skills and underlying cognitive processes and abilities. Evaluations which include assessments of broad CHC academic and cognitive ability domains, from within Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory, facilitate this process.

The CHC theory is based on a more thorough network of validity evidence than any other contemporary multi-dimensional model of intelligence within the psychometric tradition.

The Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses paradigm offers an array of standardized data to *evaluate* a profile to determine if there are c*onceptually and empirically related cognitive and academic weaknesses* that exist in an *otherwise normal ability profile.*

The CHC model is a true hierarchical model covering all major domains of intellectual functioning and appears to offer the most well-founded and reasonable approach to an accepted theory of the structure of cognitive abilities.

Flanagan and her colleagues (2007) expanded the concept of consistency between cognitive and academic deficits. The difference between discrepancy analysis and consistency analysis in evaluating performance is based on understanding the difference between ability and aptitude. Unlike global ability scores, aptitude scores comprise the specific measures of ability that are closely associated with their respective criterion measures. An aptitude is comprised of tests that measure abilities/processes that are most directly relevant to the development and acquisition of specific academic skills and thus is the best predictor of those skills. The presence of a deficiency in a particular cognitive ability or process that is either empirically or logically related to and is the presumptive cause of the observed academic deficits is the most salient aspect of an operational definition of LD. As such, an aptitude-achievement consistency is an important marker for specific learning disability.

A finding of consistency between an individual's reading aptitude and reading achievement, for example, would be a marker for specific learning disability if both reading aptitude and reading achievement were below average. If reading aptitude was average and reading achievement was significantly below average, however, then the possibility remains that factors other than a disorder in one or more basic psychological processes constitute the underlying cause of the academic skill deficiency.

Specific or narrow abilities across many of the CHC areas can be combined to yield specific aptitudes for learning in different areas. These aptitudes are expected to be consistent with their respective academic areas. The relationships between cognitive and achievement skills continue to be validated with current research (see McGrew & Wendling, 2009).

10.4 Basic and Advanced Analysis Options for Evaluators

The identification of Specific Learning Disability is moving from a paradigm in which the general populace considered the test analysis to be a simple rule of "a difference of 15 points" for a student with "IQ above 85". Well intended practitioners did not understand that there are a number of reasons why children would be misidentified or not identified when they should have been under this over-simplified approach.

In the paradigm of Pattern of Strength and Weakness, schools may choose to use a basic approach to test analysis or they may apply a more advanced cross battery approach.

Under the basic approach, the student is administered cognitive and academic measures that are co-normed. Schools may choose the instrument they are using based on preferences and what they deem to be most appropriate to the student and situation. The co-normed measures are then analyzed applying the Aptitude-Achievement Consistency model to constructs of abilities from CHC theory. The guidance offers recommended score ranges as markers of probable disability. All test scores must be reviewed relative to the meaning of the information, and validating other indicators of ability.

With the advanced approach, the student is administered subtests from a number of different intelligence tests and achievement tests. This is a complex approach for the highly skillful test interpreter who is experienced with broad and narrow band abilities and who understands the research-based relationships of those abilities with academic skills.

Notes of Caution on "Cut Scores" *Do NOT regard the suggested cut scores as absolute values.*

"Cut Scores" are offered as guidance. A student may be regarded as having a weakness when academic skills are <1 standard deviation below the mean. **A specific learning disability is a handicapping condition, not low achievement that could be manifested by nearly 1 in 5 people.** At least 17% of the general population could be functioning at the level of <1.0 standard deviation below the mean. Therefore, the recommendation was made to consider performance that is <1.4 standard deviations below the mean to be indicative of a learning level that is more likely to identify a true and substantial learning handicap. Whether using the basic or advance analysis model, the committee is recommending the < 1.4 standard deviation criterion for achievement data. HOWEVER, a group must also consider test error ranges and other types of test scores, such as Relative Proficiency Index scores or percentiles, to establish level of academic functioning. The guidance offers recommendations. The professionals doing the work make the best judgments for the students. When examining cognitive skills, scores that are <1.0 standard deviations from the mean were considered sufficient to indicate an area of weakness.

A normal ability profile is identified by at least three cognitive areas that are within normal limits (≥-1.0 standard deviations from the mean).

It is the interpretation of the total profile that is meaningful in the identification of the specific learning disability.

The following table provides a comparison of the Basic and Advanced Pattern of Strength and Weaknesses test analysis approaches.

Table 5. Comparison of Basic and Advanced Models

Basic Model: Woodcock-Johnson III/NU	Advanced Model: Cross Battery
Based on CHC Theory	Draw from 7 major test batteries using CHC Theory
Provides 7 CHC ability cluster scores	Provides 10 CHC cluster scores
Each Broad Ability Cluster includes 2 Narrow Abilities	Clusters of Narrow Abilities can be constructed for in-depth analysis
Cognitive and Achievement Batteries are co-normed	Measures of Narrow Abilities most pertinent to individual's difficulties can be selected
Comprehensive assessment of 8 major academic areas in Federal definition of LD	Comprehensive assessment of 8 major academic areas in Federal definition of LD
Measures all narrow abilities for reading	Narrow Abilities can be combined to yield specific aptitudes for learning in skill areas
Research-supported measures of executive functioning	Classifies >500 tests on the basis of CHC theory
Provides criterion-based scores including Relative Proficiency Index that are useful in planning instruction	Custom batteries for individuals
Provides intra-ability analyses that are useful in planning instruction	Automated and psychometrically defensible interpretation of clusters and ability profile
One co-normed battery offers efficiency of time and cost	Use of subtests from various test batteries can lead to more time and costs

Section 11

Considerations for the Analysis of Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

A full and individual evaluation is a problem-solving process strengthened by our willingness to consider all perspectives and possibilities, question and re-question our findings, and view results in the context of the whole child.

-Wayne County LD Committee 2009

11.1 Considerations for the Analysis of Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

Merging Response to Intervention (RtI) with our most current understanding of learning disability ties research to practice, involves multiple sources of data, requires collaboration at all stages, and informs individualized instruction. Schools systems have the ingredients to advance the technical quality and the practical utility of their decisions.

At each step of the problem-solving process we gain information that adds to our understanding of the child. Here are some questions and considerations:

Establish Achievement Areas of Normative Strength and/or Weakness

- Is the area of deficit consistent with the teacher's and parent's referral concern?

- Was the area of deficit adequately assessed? Are there component skills (fluency with word recognition and fluency with decoding), additional measures (norm-referenced and/or curriculum-based), informal assessments (reading together), work samples or further sources of data to investigate in order to increase understanding of the student and the best direction for treatment?

- Were the interventions the child received directed toward the deficit area(s)? Are there any additional interventions to implement before going further?

- Do comparisons across the academic domains indicate a disparity between the student's fluency and acquisition of basic skills, and his/her ability to understand and apply academic knowledge in context that leads to a new direction in assessment/intervention?

  For example, when the student earns lower scores on measures of basic skills, automaticity and fluency, his/her response to specific instruction, repeated practice and accommodations that reduce demands on memory and speed might be especially informative.

  As another example, relative weaknesses are apparent in the application and transfer of skills, a closer examination of the student's language comprehension, fluid reasoning skills and/or long term memory may help pinpoint useful adjustments in the content and level of instruction.

Consider Extrinsic Factors

- RTI is directly concerned with Educational Opportunity; presupposing instruction from a highly qualified teacher targeted toward specific skills and supported by research. Re-examining the data with attention to the child's rate of progress relative to his/her own baseline performance is an indicator of the importance of exposure to specific material and quality instruction.

- Educational Opportunity includes participation in preschool or other early learning programs, adjustment to a formal school setting, moves or changes in schooling, and attendance.

- Regard for the child's Educational Opportunity requires sensitivity to economic conditions, parental health, community awareness, and the numerous environmental stressors families may face. Not all families have access to early learning programs, transportation, adequate health care, or community resources. They may be struggling to cope with significant emotional stress, battling illness or meeting basic survival needs.

- Did the testing conditions (rapport, privacy, absence of distraction, lighting, etc.) support the student's "best" performance?

- Were there any situational factors, such as a recent loss, preoccupation with conflict or distress, or an uncharacteristically poor mood that lead to questioning the validity of the results?

Consider Intrinsic Factors

- A past history of health problems, or an ongoing medical condition could have a lasting impact on a child's growth as well as short-term effects on energy, concentration, memory, physical comfort, or attendance. Is the child taking any medications that might cause fatigue, mood changes, or slowed processing? Does the student typically sleep well, and get adequate nutrition?

- Similarly, it is important to consider how past and/or current hearing or vision problems impact the student's learning.

- Are there pressing worries about the child's motivation and self-confidence? When did the student begin to express negative feelings about school or avoid

work? Is he/she often reluctant to participate in classroom activities or engage with others? Are there any particular interests and activities in school that instill pride and satisfaction?

- Does the child's performance appear to vary with changes in mood, feelings of overwhelming anxiety or periods of profound sadness that raise concerns about his/her emotional adjustment?

- To what degree does the student's impulse control or ability to regulate attention appear to impact their performance? Do high levels of distractibility, over-activity, mental fatigue or a pressured pace warrant further concern?

- Cultural and familial traditions, values and social expectations shape our learning experiences, and acquisition of knowledge. An appreciation of these differences leads to a better understanding of the child's learning style (e.g. preference for group vs. independent activity; written vs. oral expression).

- How are particular difficulties with listening comprehension, oral expression, vocabulary and/or general academic knowledge related to the student's English Language Proficiency (vs. a possible language impairment).

Establish Cognitive Strengths and Weaknesses Relative to Age Norms and Same-Age Peers

- Is there evidence of a processing deficit consistent with the prevailing definition of specific learning disability?

- Is the processing deficit consistent with the concerns at home and in the classroom? Is more information needed to help understand the specific nature of apparent processing difficulties? Would observing a particular type of activity, examining work samples, taking another look at historical data, talking further with the classroom teacher, using rating scales, or administering additional tests expand the team's understanding of how the student appears to think through problems, acquire and store knowledge, and manage demands on attention and organization?

- Do the results reveal processing strengths that indicate intact functioning in areas that would not be expected to be affected by the disability?

- Were the interventions the child received intended to build areas of apparent weakness and/or capitalize on apparent strengths? In light of additional information, are there other targeted interventions the team would recommend?

Critical Test Pattern Analysis

- Does research support a causal link between the processing deficit and the academic deficit? Is the deficit area consistent with the referral concern?

- Does research support a logical relationship between the child's cognitive strengths and the areas of greatest academic growth?

- Are broad developmental delays apparent; deficits of more than one and a half standard deviations below the mean across multiple areas of cognitive processing and academic achievement?

- Did the pattern analysis take into account what we are learning about the changing relationship between cognitive factors and academic performance associated with age and stage of development?

  For example, auditory processing skills, working memory and naming facility have the strongest correlations with reading achievement in the elementary school years. As the student gets older, the relationship between crystallized knowledge, including; verbal reasoning, vocabulary, and general information and reading achievement strengthens. Crystallized knowledge also assumes an increasingly important role in the development of math skills with age. Processing speed and efficiency are closely tied with math achievement at all ages, but the strongest relationships emerge during elementary school.

- Current research places a particular emphasis on the relationship between language development and learning disabilities in reading, writing and math. Findings indicate language-based deficits occur with greater frequency than deficits in non-verbal processing among people with a learning disability.

- Does the examiner have a good understanding of the child's language, including; the progression from early milestones to current functioning, and the

relationships between listening comprehension vs. reading comprehension, spoken language vs. written language, and the understanding of word meanings vs. naming facility?

- Are results characteristic of students with a learning disability or do they raise concerns about a more global language impairment? Is further consultation and/or assessment by a speech/language pathologist needed?

Consider Extrinsic and Intrinsic Factors

The interplay among factors; physical behaviors, emotions, language, attention, cognition and academic skill development is complex. We know that specific learning disabilities often co-exist with other disruptions or differences in development (i.e. pre-natal and post natal complications, emotional trauma, language delay, ADHD, Tourette syndrome, Autistic Spectrum disorders, etc.) Designating a single cause or a single solution for a student's struggles in school would seem highly unlikely and short-sighted.

- Do the patterns and the information accumulated up to this point suggest that a specific learning disability is the primary cause of the student's failure to achieve and/or make sufficient progress?

- Is additional information needed from the student, his/her parents or the child's teacher? Is further observation or assessment necessary to help clarify the "primary cause"?

- Do significant concern about the impact of extrinsic and intrinsic factors indicate the need to consider other areas of disability, review existing evaluation data (REED), and involve additional staff?

Application to Activities of Daily Living that Require Reading, Math or Writing

When **professional judgment** and the weight of evidence indicate a specific learning disability, the team must discuss the impact of the disability on the child's daily experiences, and his/her functioning at school and in the community.

- Does a broad survey of current and historical information (early development, previous educational experiences, progress reports, prior evaluation results, etc.) add together to strengthen each team member's appreciation of the whole child, and provide clear direction for planning, setting expectations, delivering instruction and attaining the skills he/she needs to reach grade-level standards?

- Does the disability affect the child's level of independence, ease with routines and transitions, participation in classroom activities, or ability to follow directions and carry out tasks in school or at home?

- Does the student's disability clearly impact his/her performance on state, district and teacher-made tests, quarterly grades, and ability to complete daily assignments?

- Does the disability impact the student's judgment, impulse control, social skill or ability to regulate attention?

- Is the impact of the disability on the child's self-esteem and/or emotional adjustment a concern? Are feelings of frustration, anger, sadness or shame impeding his/her engagement in learning or relationships with peers and adults?

- Does the student's disability limit his/her opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities and organizations, enjoy recreation, or choose electives that expand on interests and strengths?

Section12

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Decision Process

"…cognitive abilities are measures of achievements, and measures of achievements are just as surely measures of cognitive abilities"

-John L. Horn

12.1 Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Decision Process

Consideration Steps	***Task Description***		
Step 1: Using Curriculum-Based Measures, Establish Relative Standing In Comparison to Peers in IDEA Achievement Area **Note: Measurement of repeated underachievement should be accompanied by documented instructional interventions for at least 9 weeks.*	Identify the academic performance level of the student using progress monitoring and/or curriculum based measurement, as defined by the instructional program of the school.	THE CLASSROOM EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT WEAKNESSES Repeated Measures < 10th Percentile on Curriculum Based Measure **AND/OR** Repeated Measures At/Below 50% Proficiency Target for the Specific Skill	THE CLASSROOM EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT STRENGTHS Establish Performance Consistency with Consistency with Performance Levels of Peers AND/OR Benchmark Targets Identify normative strengths that will support instructional planning for the student.
Step 2: Review Quality of Curriculum Measurement	Establish the reliability, validity, and relevance of the available measures progress and performance in the curriculum.	1. *Do the test items align to the pacing of the content in the grade level curriculum?* 2. *Is the difficulty of the test items aligned to classroom performance targets?* 3. *When using measures based on teacher judgment (i.e., rubrics, leveled readers, ratings) is the teacher scoring consistent with the scoring of another independent rater?* 4. *Did repeated measures include a minimum of 12 probes on specific skills?*	
Step 3: Consider Extrinsic and Intrinsic Factors	Consider the range of possible explanations other than a disability within the student that could explain their performance level.	Intrinsic Factors: Health, Sensory, Attention, Motivation, Emotion, Limited English, Other Handicapping Conditions Extrinsic Factors: Education Opportunity, Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions, Teacher Qualifications, Data Integrity *If extrinsic or intrinsic factors explain performance, revisit REED to identify other areas of suspected handicap. Student may or may not have a suspected Learning Disability. Other conditions may or may not also exist and may require instructional planning/accommodation.*	

Consideration	**Task Description**		
Step 4- Part A: Establish Achievement Areas of Strength and/or Weakness Based on 1 or More Normative Measures that Incorporate a Minimum of 2 Subtests within IDEA Achievement Area	Use 1 or more tests in the achievement area. Look for the pattern of academic skills across normative levels. Identify the cluster(s) of skills that emerge as strengths. Identify the cluster(s) of skills that emerge as weakness/deficit based on normative data.	THE NORM-REFERENCED EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT WEAKNESS < - 1.4 Standard Deviation < 80 Standard Score < 9 Percentile AND/OR <67/90 RPI **Note: This recommended score range is NOT sufficient evidence to identify a learning disability. The team must consider test error along with all other data and information sources.*	THE NORM-REFERENCED EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT STRENGTHS Establish Consistency of Achievement Skills Across Normative Levels Identify the normative strengths among academic skills that will validate classroom indicators and shape the total profile of student learning and ability.
Step 4 – Part B Option: Explanation for use of Relative Proficiency Index (RPI) and developmental achievement data instead of standard score data.	Different skills emerge at different ages. Look at developmental level data, such as RPI scores, that will indicate how the individual compares to age-mates in learning the skill.	**Considerations for Emphasizing RPI and Other Developmental Data: Standard Score may be >-1.4 Standard Deviation IF the following conditions are documented:** 1. RPI is <76/90 on 1 or more norm referenced tests (2 subtests) within IDEA area 2. Response to Intervention trials of no less than 9-12 weeks 3. Documentation of fidelity of Response to Intervention 4. Repeated measures document proficiency at <50% proficiency (benchmark) target and/or proficiency below the 10th percentile on repeated measures of target skills. 5. Deficits of cognitive and academic skills exist in an otherwise normal ability profile	
Step5: Consider Extrinsic and Intrinsic Factors That May Explain the Achievement Scores	Consider the range of possible explanations other than a disability within the student that could explain the performance level(s).	Intrinsic Factors: Health, Sensory, Attention, Motivation, Emotion, Limited English, Other Handicapping Conditions Extrinsic Factors: Testing Conditions, Education Opportunity, Social Economic Status, Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions, Teacher Qualifications, Data Integrity *If other extrinsic or intrinsic factors explain performance, there is not sufficient evidence to regard the student as a person with a specific learning disability.*	

Step	**Task Description**		
Step 6: Establish Normative Cognitive Strengths and Weaknesses Based on Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Clusters of Cognitive Abilities	Analyze cognitive cluster scores using a minimum of 2 subtests per cluster. Identify the CHC cluster(s) of skills that emerge as strengths. Identify the CHC cluster(s) of skills that emerge as weakness/deficit based on normative data.	THE NORM-REFERENCED EVIDENCE OF COGNITIVE WEAKNESSES < 1.0 Standard Deviation <85 Standard Score <15 Percentile AND/OR <76/90 RPI **Note: This recommended score range is NOT sufficient evidence to identify a learning disability. The team must consider test error along with all other data and information sources.*	THE NORM-REFERENCED EVIDENCE OF COGNITIVE STRENGTHS Identify the normative strengths among cognitive skills that help to explain learning strengths and develop instructional planning. A Normative Strength is 1 cognitive area >-1.0 to +2.0 SD >85 Standard Score >15 Percentile >76/90 RPI
Step 7: Consider Extrinsic and Intrinsic Factors	Consider the range of possible explanations other than a disability within the student that could explain the performance level(s).	Intrinsic Factors: Health, Sensory, Attention, Motivation, Emotion, Limited English, Other Handicapping Conditions Extrinsic Factors: Testing Conditions, Education Opportunity, Social Status *If other extrinsic or intrinsic factors explain performance, student is not Learning Disabled.*	
Step 8: Establish Pattern of Ability/Achievement Consistency Across Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Clusters	Analyze test cluster patterns to determine the alignment of the area(s) of cognitive weakness to the achievement area(s) of weakness/deficit.	PATTERN OF COGNITIVE-ACHIEVEMENT WEAKNESS Minimum of 1 cognitive cluster aligned to a minimum of 1 achievement area(s) that represent a circumscribed learning deficit.	PATTERN OF COGNITIVE-ACHIEVEMENT STRENGTH Establish how the student profile is representing the cognitive and achievement areas that are normative strengths. Are the cognitive strengths consistent with the academic strengths?

Consideration	Task Description	*Essential Analysis Questions*
Step 9: Critical Test Pattern Analysis Questions	Think about how the test patterns fit together based on research, psychometric analysis, logic, and other information about the student.	*1.) Is the potential presence of a normative deficit in a specific cognitive ability related to the observed academic deficit?* *2.) What is the logic or empirical evidence that the cognitive deficit is causally linked to the academic deficit?* *3.) Is the deficit consistent with the concerns at home, in the classroom, and other information sources?*
Step 10: Establish Whether or Not an Otherwise Normal Ability Profile Exists	Combine the measurement data, using test analysis procedures, research reference, and logic to answer this essential question.	*Do the deficits in academic and cognitive abilities exist within an otherwise normal ability profile?* A Normal Ability Profile is defined as 3 or more cognitive areas >-1.0 SD to +2.0 SD >85 Standard Score >15 Percentile >75/90 RPI
Step 11: Application to Activities of Daily Living that Require Reading, Math, or Writing	Review of student educational functioning, including : • Classroom Observation – evidence of disability in class performance - Required • State Assessment Performance (MEAP) Grades • Additional Classroom Assessment Data • Results of Prior Evaluations • Evidence of hindrance in school, work, social, or recreational activity explained by deficit	

Section 13

Examples of
Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses
in
Specific Learning Disability Areas

"The intelligent design of assessments does not come from a higher power—it comes from integrating the research … with professional and clinical experience."

-Kevin McGrew

13.1 Examples of Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses in Specific Learning Disability Areas

The following graphic portrays the constellation of academic and cognitive skills that are considered when establishing a pattern of strength and weakness. The profile of normative test data and presenting information are analyzed for goodness of fit to research-based subtypes of specific learning disability. Academic area deficit is identified by normative deficit that is approximately 1.4 standard deviations or more below the normal range or, using Developmental Data, a Relative Proficiency Index less than 67/90 of age proficiency. Cognitive weakness is identified by evidence of Carroll-Horn-Cattell cluster scores that are approximately 1.0 or more standard deviations below the normal range. Academic and cognitive skills are analyzed by patterns of consistencies in the skills that describe the learning deficit. The normative strengths are then examined to complete the profile of the student's learning abilities. Again, the consistencies among academic and cognitive skills are established. The profile of strengths and weaknesses are then analyzed relative to evidence of normative strengths in general abilities. The test data analyses are then validated by considering the multiple measures of student performance from parent input, teacher report, classroom measures, educational history, and other evidence of learning patterns. The outcome of the analysis must always be focused on educational relevance and lead to instructionally appropriate recommendations.

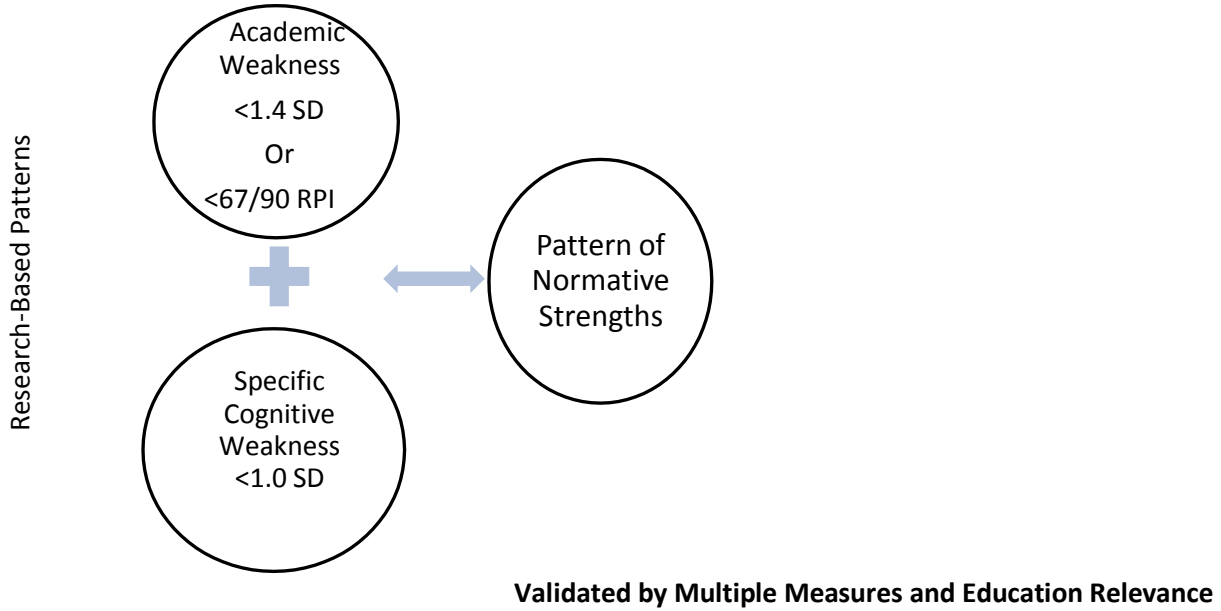


Figure 5. Model for analysis of pattern of strengths and weaknesses based on validity studies of specific learning disability.

The following graphic represents the patterns of strengths and weaknesses among academic and cognitive skills. These patterns have been established in research on types of learning disability and on validity studies on the relationship of academic skills to clusters of cognitive skills that align to the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) model of intelligence and cognition.

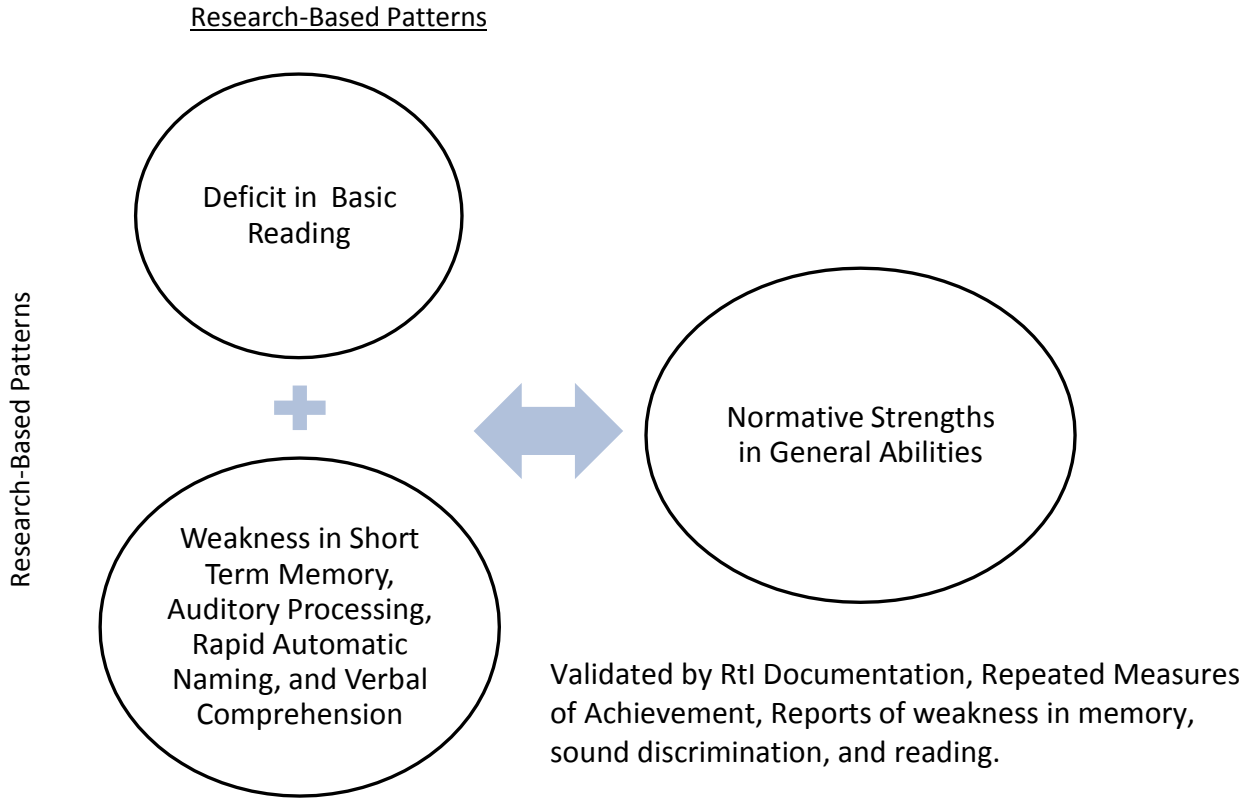


Figure 5. Example pattern of specific learning disability in basic reading.

Applying this model to the analysis of patterns of strength and weaknesses involves many considerations, including evidence from validity studies on specific learning disabilities, subtypes, age factors, and educational implications. The following table summarizes characteristics of specific learning disabilities from validity studies of cognitive and achievement patterns. The summary is intended to serve as an example of considerations in conducting an analysis of patterns of strengths and weaknesses.

Table 7. Example Profiles of Specific Learning Disabilities: Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses and Educational Considerations

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Basic Reading **Definition:** A learning disability in basic reading is characterized by difficulties in basic letter and word identification skills.	Basic Reading Word Identification	Short Term Memory, Auditory Processing, Rapid Automatic Naming, Verbal Comprehension	Slow reading rate. Weaknesses in sound discrimination and memory. Slow rate of performance. Does not read accurately at grade benchmarks	**6-8:** Short term memory plays moderate relationship to reading difficulties. **9-20**: As students get older, verbal comprehension skills are strongly related to basic reading skills. Short term memory continues to be related to basic memory skills. **17+:** Visual spatial reasoning skills related to basic reading deficits with adults.	Direct instruction of letters and words. Decoding skills Train automatic recognition of common high frequency words. Strategies to improve immediate recall of words and images.
Reading Fluency **Definition:** Reading fluency is the ability to read accurately and quickly. In the context of specific learning disability identification, this achievement area refers to subtypes commonly referred to as Phonological Core Deficit.	Reading Fluency Reading Rate Reading Accuracy	Long Term Memory, Short Term Memory, Auditory Processing, Processing Speed Is not related to General Intelligence or Verbal Comprehension.	Difficulty with decoding skills. Slow reading rate. *May be associated with disability in Math Calculation, fact fluency subtype.*	**6-8:** Period of rapid acquisition of reading fluency skills. Moderate relationship to skills long term memory, short term memory, and auditory processing. Most students respond to explicit direct instruction. **9-12:** Strong correlation with Verbal Comprehension. Moderate relationship to short term memory. **13+:** Increasing relationship to verbal comprehension.	Direct instruction in learning to read accurately and quickly with expression develop letter-sound fluency, irregular word fluency, oral reading fluency provide repeated oral reading practice

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Reading Comprehension **Definition:** A learning disability in reading comprehension is characterized by limitations in the ability to understand the meaning of words and passages.	Reading comprehension May be oral reading and/or silent reading activities, as appropriate to age, grade, or state standard benchmarks.	Verbal Comprehension, Long Term Memory, Processing Speed, Fluid Reasoning	Slow reading rate. Errors in accuracy of reading complex material. Difficulty retaining information and dealing with length of text. May be associated with Basic Reading Deficits.	**6-8:** Moderate relationship to auditory skills at young age. Memory factors moderately correlated with reading deficits. **9-12:** Strong correlation with verbal comprehension. Short term memory continues to be moderately related to reading comprehension. **13+:** Relationship to verbal comprehension increases through adolescence.	With young children, multiple exposures to words, language, and print material. Across age levels: Guided reading. Activation of prior knowledge. Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts. Reading strategy lessons.
Math Calculation (General) **Definition:** A learning disability in math calculation generally refers to deficits in the ability to count and to perform basic mathematical operations.	Math calculation skills for basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division	Fluid Reasoning, Long Term Memory, Processing Speed, Auditory Short Term Memory	Counting errors. Counting strategies are those of developmentally younger child. Difficulty with basic number and operations content standards. Difficulty with visual reasoning tasks. Student does not recall math facts.	**6-8:** Moderate relationship to short term memory and long term memory skills. **9-12:** Verbal comprehension skills become more strongly related to math calculation than at younger age. Moderate relationship of processing speed, fluid reasoning, and short term memory to calculation ability. **13+:** Short term memory is less important. Verbal comprehension has moderate correlation. **17+:** Short term memory	Activities to improve memory of numbers, ordering, and procedures. Speeded recall trials. Counting strategies. Manipulative learning tools. Applications of calculations to real world situations. Even with calculators, use instructional supports for reasoning and application of rules.

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Math Calculation (Math Fluency Subtype) **Definition:** Math Fluency Subtype of Math Calculation Disability is characterized by difficulties retrieving math facts and, when retrieved, there is a high error rate. This subtype is often also referred to as the "Semantic Memory Subtype".	Math Calculation Poor math fact fluency as measured by rate and accuracy of performance with math facts.	Long Term Retrieval, Auditory Processing, Short Term Memory, Processing Speed	Student is inaccurate with basic math operations. Student is slow with completion of math calculation problems. Student does not accurately recall math facts. May be associated with Basic Reading Deficits.	This subtype of Math Calculation disability does not improve with age.	Use of calculators. Training on compensatory strategies.
Math Reasoning (General) **Definition:** Students with Learning disability in applied math skills have difficulty solving math problems that involve using math computation to solve real world problems.	Math Reasoning	Fluid Reasoning, Long Term Retrieval, Verbal Comprehension	Difficulty with inferential reasoning. Difficulty retrieving math facts. Difficulties with verbal reasoning. May be associated with math calculation deficits.	**6-8:** Moderate relationship to short term memory and long term memory. **9-12:** Increasing relationship of fluid reasoning, verbal comprehension, and short term memory to math reasoning. **13+:** Strong relationship of fluid reasoning to math reasoning. Declining role of short term memory.	Direct instruction of math facts. Activities that emphasize inferential reasoning. Instruction that provides experience with concepts of properties and relationships that apply to mathematical solutions.

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Math Reasoning **(Procedural Math Disability Subtype)** **Definition:** This math disability subtype is characterized by the student's relatively frequent use of developmentally immature procedures with frequent errors in the execution of procedures.	Math Reasoning Features: (1) The ability to follow sequential directions when applied to abstract and math concepts; (2) The ability to generalize and apply understood classifications; (3) to order, organize, and sequence quantitative ideas; (4) to have a command of spatial orientation and organization; (5) to understand and employ estimation; (6) to visually cluster objects; (7) to recognize and extend patterns; (8) to visualize quantitative ideas; (9) to think deductively; and (10) to think inductively- easily seeing patterns in situations, and interrelationships between procedures and concepts.	Executive Functioning, Verbal Comprehension, Fluid Reasoning, Long Term Memory	Counting errors. Student applies strategies that are developmentally immature for counting and math solution. Difficulties sequencing steps in complex procedures. Frequent errors in the execution of math procedures. Poor understanding of concepts underlying procedure use.	**6-8:** Most apparent with young children, as observed in the strategies they spontaneously employ to count and order operations. **9-12:** With most students, there is improvement with age and grade. Persistence of deficits with age with relationship to verbal comprehension and fluid reasoning. **13+:** Improvements with age and grade. Difficulties may persist with complex higher order math courses.	At young ages, direct instruction on basic computation numbers, operations, and relationships. Rehearsal of math procedures and steps. Instruction of math concepts that demonstrates essential components to patterns and relationships in math problems. Compensatory strategies adhering to sequential directions.

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Nonverbal Learning Disorder **Definition:** The disorder is characterized by impaired abilities to organize the visual-spatial field, adapt to new or novel situations, and/or accurately read nonverbal signals and cues. The student will have difficulty "producing" in situations where speed and adaptability are required. *Not one of the 8 IDEA LD areas. Often is identified as a math or language disability, if not as version of Autism Spectrum Disorder.*	Reading Comprehension AND Math Calculation AND Math Concepts AND Language Skills, Pragmatics, Semantics, and Prosody	**Weaknesses:** Fluid Reasoning, Short Term Memory, Visual-Spatial Thinking **Strengths:** Verbal Comprehension, Auditory Processing, Basic Reading	Poor social judgment, often missing subtle non-verbal social cues in communication. Difficulty with math calculation, math reasoning, and reading comprehension. Inflexible. Often associated with Asperger's Syndrome and there are some who believe NLD is a form of ASD.	The condition worsens with age. The student becomes more impaired in social functioning, academic performance, and less adaptive.	Lesson scaffolds that provide organizational and semantic structures to support student learning. Development of instructional plans with instructional and ancillary service providers that support language/social cues and academic learning.

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Written Expression **Definition:** The student's ability to communicate in writing is substantially below grade expectations. This disability affects both the physical reproduction of letters and words and the organization of thoughts and ideas in written compositions. The disability area most likely represents a constellation of disabilities that may be further sub-typed in future research.	Written expression Not to be limited to deficits in spelling. The deficit is typically characterized by deficit in the ability to express ideas in writing.	Long-Term Memory, Auditory Processing, Processing Speed, Executive functions May also include grapho-motor features.	Student has difficulty retrieving words in spontaneous writing. Student has substantial difficulty with organizing thoughts for the production of writing. Fine motor coordination may be implicated for difficulties in letter formation. May be associated with Basic Reading Disability.	**6-8:** Observed in spelling errors and limited production of words and sentences on paper. Ortho-graphic features to writing. Memory for words and memory for sounds in words. **9-12:** As grade level writing demands increase, the written expression deficits become more apparent. Organization and long term memory skills of increasing relationship to writing. Memory of words, writing structures, and ideas. **13+:** Grapho-motor features less important. Skills for verbal comprehension, organization, reading, and language of increasing emphasis.	The most complex academic skill to teach and learn. At young ages, explicit instruction of basic skills for reading and for the production of words in print is fundamental. All ages, instruction on language structure and examples of writing. Use of graphic representations to support memory and to structure organization.

Specific Learning Disability	Deficit in Achievement Area	Weakness in CHC Cognitive Area	Other Indicators Validating Evidence	Age Considerations	Educational Considerations
Listening Comprehension **Definition:** Learning disability in listening comprehension typically refers to a developmental disorder in the understanding of spoken language that adversely impacts academic learning.	Listening Comprehension Refers to the ability to comprehend spoken language.	Auditory Processing, Verbal Comprehension, Short Term Memory, Long Term Memory, Fluid Reasoning	Student does not follow directions. Student is confused by auditory directions. May be associated with deficits in Basic Reading, Math Reasoning, Reading Comprehension, and Oral Expression.	In young children, listening comprehension may impact acquisition of skills for learning sounds in words and language components foundational to reading.	Typically addressed through the services of the Speech and Language Pathologist. Direct training on sound and meaning of words in isolation and in context of meaningful communication.
Oral Expression **Definition:** The student has difficulty formulating age appropriate verbal responses. The hallmark feature to a learning disability in oral expression is the adverse impact on academic performance.	Oral Expression Refers to the ability to express ideas so that they are understandable.	Verbal Comprehension, Long Term Memory	Oral expression interferes with acquisition of basic skills. May be associated with deficits in Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, and Written Expression, and Listening Skills.	Many young children get identified for speech and language services. As they reach middle years and academic skills fail to develop at expectation, their eligibility is changed to represent the impacted achievement area.	Typically addressed through the services of the Speech and Language Pathologist.

Section 14

Final Considerations in Specific Learning Disability Identification

"In the hybrid model…an evaluation of LD requires an assessment of RtI, norm-referenced assessments of achievement, and an evaluation of contextual factors and associated conditions that may explain the achievement problem and, most important, suggest alternative intervention needs that differ from those that directly address achievement issues through instructional methods."

-Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, Barnes (2007)

14.1 Final Considerations in Specific Learning Disability Identification

Referring to the Model for the Identification of Specific Learning Disability, the purpose of the evaluation is to surround the student of concern with the best and most comprehensive information possible to make a valid and appropriate recommendation as to the student's instructional program. Having completed the essential requirements to understand the learner and the context of learning for the individual, the team must apply their knowledge and interpretation of the multiple sources of data to make their best judgments as to the existence of the handicapping condition and the instructional interventions the student will require to progress in the general education curriculum.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- ☐ Does the student achieve at State standards for grade?
- ☐ Is the learning deficit observed by an independent rater in the classroom in which instruction is delivered?
- ☐ Are there other factors that explain the learning deficit?
- ☐ What is the learning improvement trend for the student with instruction?
- ☐ What is the learning level of the student when compared to expectations for the age/grade of the general education program?
- ☐ What is the evidence of a pattern of normative specific deficits in a profile of a student with normative strength?
- ☐ How does the parent's report describe the student's development, life experiences and the learning patterns observed in the home?
- ☐ How does the teacher's report describe the instructional program, the student and the learning patterns?
- ☐ What does other evaluation information tell us about the student?
- ☐ How is the student succeeding in current classroom instruction?
- ☐ Was the student given opportunities to acquire skills using a process of instructional interventions?
- ☐ Are normative achievement deficits evidenced with other measures of achievement?

Section 15

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Table of IDEA LD Achievement Areas, CHC Abilities, and Measurements

The following table depicts the 8 achievement areas that are defined in IDEA aligned to the CHC abilities that are subsumed by the achievement areas. The table then lists the tests and measurement tools that assess within those ability areas.

IDEA LD Achievement Areas, CHC Abilities, and Measurements

LD Achievement Area	CHC Narrow Ability	WJ – III Achievement Tests	Supplementary Norm-Referenced Examples		Criterion Referenced and Progress Monitoring Measurements
			Comprehensive Achievement Batteries	Tests Developed to Measure Skills in Achievement Areas	
Basic Reading Ability	Reading Decoding (RD) Phonetic Coding: Analysis (PC:A) Phonetic Coding: Synthesis (PC:S)	Test 1: Letter-Word Identification Extended Battery: Test 13: Word Attack	**KTEA-II** Letter Word Recognition Nonsense Word Decoding **WIAT-II** Word Reading Pseudoword Decoding	Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) Gray Diagnostic Reading Test (GDRT – 2) Gray Oral Reading Tests (GORT-4) Phonics Based Reading Test (PRT) RAN/RAS Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-3) Test of Phonological Awareness Test of Reading Efficiency (TOWRE) Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)	DIBELS AIMSWEB Star Early Literacy (SEL) Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) Basal Reader Assessments Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments

LD Achievement Area	CHC Narrow Ability	WJ – III Achievement Tests	Supplementary Norm-Referenced Examples		Criterion Referenced and Progress Monitoring Measurements
			Comprehensive Achievement Batteries	Tests Developed to Measure Skills in Achievement Areas	
Reading Comprehension	Reading Comprehension (RC) Cloze Ability (CZ) Verbal (printed) Language Comprehension (V)	Passage Comprehension **Extended Battery:** Test 17: Reading Vocabulary	**KTEA-II** Reading Comprehension **WIAT-II** Reading Comprehension	Gray Diagnostic Reading Test (GDRT – 2) Gray Oral Reading Test (GORT-4) Gray Silent Reading Tests (GSRT) Phonics Based Reading Test (PRT) Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-3) Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)	AIMSWEB Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) Star Reading Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
Reading Fluency Skills	Reading Speed (RS)	Reading Fluency	**KTEA-II** Word Recognition Fluency Decoding Fluency	Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) Gray Oral Reading Tests (GORT-4) Phonics Based Reading Test (PRT) RAN/RAS Test of Reading Efficiency (TOWRE) Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)	DIBELS AIMSWEB Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments Curriculum Based Measurement in Reading Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) ISTEEP Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)

LD Achievement Area	CHC Narrow Ability	WJ – III Achievement Tests	Supplementary Norm-Referenced Examples		Criterion Referenced and Progress Monitoring Measurements
			Comprehensive Achievement Batteries	Tests Developed to Measure Skills in Achievement Areas	
Written Expression	Spelling Ability (SG) Writing Ability (WA) English Usage Knowledge (EU)	Test 7: Spelling Test 8: Writing Fluency Test 11: Writing Samples **Extended Battery:** Test 16: Editing	**KTEA-II** Written Expression Spelling **WIAT-II** Spelling Written Expression	Oral and Written Language Scales: Written Expression (OWLS: WE) Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-3) Test of Early Written Language (TEWL-2) Test of Written Language (TOWL-3)	MEAP/MME Writing Rubrics
Mathematics Calculation	Math Knowledge (KM) Math Achievement (A3) Number Facility (N)	Test: 5: Calculation Test 6: Math Fluency	**KTEA-II** Math Concepts and Applications Math Computation **WIAT-II** Numerical Operations	Comprehensive Mathematical Abilities Test (CMAT) Key Math-Revised/ NU (KM-R/NU)	AIMSWEB mCLASS Math Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP) Star Math
Mathematics Reasoning	Math Achievement (A3) Math Knowledge (KM) Quantitative Reasoning (RQ)	Test 10: Applied Problems **Extended Battery:** Quantitative Concepts	**KTEA-II** Math Concepts and Applications **WIAT-II** Math Reasoning	Comprehensive Mathematical Abilities Test (CMAT) Key Math-Revised/ NU (KM-R/NU)	mCLASS Math Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP) Star Math

LD Achievement Area	CHC Narrow Ability	WJ – III Achievement Tests	Supplementary Norm-Referenced Examples		Criterion Referenced and Progress Monitoring Measurements
			Comprehensive Achievement Batteries	Tests Developed to Measure Skills in Achievement Areas	
Listening Comprehension	Listening Ability (LS) Language Development (LD) Receptive Lexical Knowledge (VL) Receptive	Test 4: Understanding Directions Extended Battery: Test 15: Oral Comprehension	**KTEA-III** Listening Comprehension **WIAT-II** Listening Comprehension	Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF-4) Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL) Comprehensive Receptive & Expressive Vocabulary Test Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III) Receptive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (RO-WPVT) Test of Early Language Development (TELD-3) Test of Language Development (TOLD) The WORD test (WORD-2) Listening Comprehension Test (LCT) Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)	Brigance Listening Comprehension

LD Achievement Area	CHC Narrow Ability	WJ – III Achievement Tests	Supplementary Norm-Referenced Examples		Criterion Referenced and Progress Monitoring Measurements
			Comprehensive Achievement Batteries	Tests Developed to Measure Skills in Achievement Areas	
Oral Expression	Oral Production and Fluency (OP) Language Development (LD) Expressive Lexical Knowledge (VL) Expressive	Test 3: Story Recall Extended Battery: Test 14: Picture Vocabulary	**KTEA-III** Oral Expression **WIAT-II** Oral Expression	Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF-4) Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL) Comprehensive Receptive & Expressive Vocabulary Test (CREVT-2) Expressive One Word Vocabulary Test (EO-WPVT) Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT) Gray Diagnostic Reading Test (GDRT – 2) Test of Early Language Development (TELD-3) The Word Test (WORD-2) Test of Language Competence (TLC)	MLPP Expressive Language

Table Compiles Information from the Following Sources:
Flanagan, et al. (2006) The Achievement Test Desk Reference: A Guide to Learning Disability Identification (Second Edition). John Wiley & Sons Mather, Nancy & Woodcock, Richard W. (2001) Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement. Riverside
National Center on Response to Intervention Progress Monitoring Tools;
http://www.rti4success.org/chart/progressMonitoring/progressmonitoringtoolschart.htm#

APPENDIX B

Table of CHC Abilities, Measurements and Relation to Academic Achievement

The following table provides a definition of the 7 Cattell-Horn-Carroll ability areas in alignment to the subtests that measure skills within those clusters. The table then provides information as to validity research on the relationship of the CHC abilities within the broad achievement areas of Reading, Mathematics, and Writing.

CHC Abilities, Measurements and Relation to Academic Achievement

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-J III Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc) **Definition:** *The breadth and depth of knowledge including verbal communication and information. Reasoning, when using previously learned procedures, is also included.*	**Language Development (LD)** **Significantly related to reading achievement*	General development or the understanding of words, sentences, and paragraphs (not requiring reading) in spoken native language skills.	**Test 1 Verbal Comprehension** *Picture Vocabulary* *Synonyms* *Antonyms* *Verbal Analogies* Extended Battery: General Information	**K-ABC** *Expressive Vocabulary* *Verbal Knowledge* *Riddles* **WISC-IV** *Vocabulary* *Information* *Similarities* *Comprehension* *Word Reasoning* **WAIS-III** *Vocabulary* *Information* *Similarities* *Comprehension* **WPPSI-III** *Vocabulary* *Information* *Similarities* *Comprehension* *Receptive Vocabulary* *Picture Naming* *Word Reasoning*	Language development, lexical knowledge, and listening ability are important at all ages. These abilities become more important with age.	Language development, lexical knowledge, and listening ability are important at all ages. These abilities become more important with age.	AFTER AGE 7, language development, lexical knowledge, and general information are important. These abilities become increasingly more important with age.
	Lexical Knowledge (VL) **Significantly related to reading achievement*	Extent of vocabulary that can be understood in terms of correct word meanings.					
	General Verbal Information (KO)	Range of general knowledge.					

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Long-Term Retrieval (Glr) **Definition:** The ability to store information efficiently and retrieve it later through association.	**Associative Memory (MA)**	Ability to recall one part of a previously learned but unrelated pair of items when the other part is presented (i.e., paired associative learning).	Test 2: Visual-Auditory Associative Memory Test 10: Delayed Visual-Auditory Learning – Delayed *Associative Memory* Extended Battery: Retrieval Fluency *Ideational fluency*	**K-ABC** *Atlantis* *Rebus* *Atlantis Delayed* *Rebus Delayed*	Naming facility (NA) or rapid automatic naming is very important during the elementary school years. Associative memory (MA).		Naming facility (NA) or rapid automatic naming has demonstrated relations with written expression, primarily the fluency aspect of writing.
	Ideational Fluency (FI)	Ability to produce rapidly a series of ideas, words, or phrases related to a specific condition or object.					
	Naming Facility (NA) **Significantly related to reading achievement*	Ability to produce rapidly names for concepts.					
	Meaningful Memory (MM)	Ability to recall a set of items where there is a meaningful relation between items or the items comprise a meaningful story or connected discourse.					

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Visual-Spatial Thinking (Gv) **Definition:** Spatial orientation, the ability to analyze and synthesize visual stimuli, and the ability to hold and manipulate mental images.	**Visualization (VZ)**	Ability to mentally manipulate objects or visual patterns and to see, in the "mind's eye", how they would appear under altered conditions.	Test 3: Spatial Relations *Visualization* *Spatial Relations* **Extended Battery:** Test 13: Picture Recognition *Visual Memory* Test 19: Planning *Spatial scanning* *General sequential reasoning*	**K-ABC** Face Recognition Triangles Gestalt Closure Rover Block Counting Conceptual Thinking **WISC-IV** Block Design Picture Completion **WAIS-III** Block Design Object Assembly Picture Arrangement Picture Completion **WPPSI-III** Block Design Object Assembly Picture Completion	Orthographic procession	May be important primarily for higher level or advanced mathematics (e.g., geometry, calculus.)	
	Spatial Relations (SR)	Ability to perceive and manipulate visual patterns or to maintain orientation with respect to objects in space.					
	Visual Memory (MV)	Ability to form and store a mental representation or image of a visual stimulus and then recognize or recall it later.					
	Spatial Scanning (SS)	Ability to survey a spatial field or pattern accurately and identify a path through the visual field or pattern.					

CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Auditory Processing (Ga) **Definition:** The ability to discriminate, analyze, and synthesize auditory stimuli. Also related to phonological awareness.	**Phonetic Coding (PC)** **Significantly related to reading achievement*	Ability to process speech sounds, as in identifying, isolating, and blending sounds-phonological awareness.	Test 4: Sound Blending *Phonetic Coding: Synthesis* Test 8 Incomplete Words *Phonetic Coding: Analysis*	**K-ABC** **WISC-IV** **WAIS-III** **WPPSI-III**	Phonological coding (PC) or phonological awareness is very important during the elementary school years.		Phonological coding (PC) or phonological awareness or processing are very important during the elementary school years for both basic writing skills and written expression (primarily before age 11).
	Resistance to Auditory Stimulus Distortion (UR)	Ability to understand speech that has been distorted or masked in one or more ways.	**Extended Battery:** Test 14 Auditory Attention *Speech-sound discrimination* *Resistance to auditory stimulus distortion*				
	Speech-Sound Discrimination (US)	Ability to discriminate particular phonemes or speech sounds.					

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Fluid Reasoning (Gf) **Definition:** The ability to reason and solve problems that often involve unfamiliar information or procedures. Manifested in the reorganization, transformation, and extrapolation of information.	**General Sequential Reasoning (RG)** **Significantly related to math achievement*	Ability to start with stated rules, premises, or conditions and to engage in one or more steps to reach a solution to a problem.	**Extended Battery:** Analysis-Synthesis *Sequential reasoning* *Test 19: Planning* *Spatial scanning* *General sequential reasoning*	**K-ABC** Pattern Reasoning Story Comprehension **WISC-IV** Matrix Reasoning Picture Concepts **WAIS-III** Matrix Reasoning **WPPSI-III** Matrix Reasoning Picture Concepts	Inductive (I) and general sequential reasoning (RG) abilities play a moderate role in reading comprehension.	Inductive (I) and general sequential reasoning (RG) abilities are consistently very important at all ages.	Inductive (I) and general sequential reasoning (RG) abilities are related to basic writing skills primarily during the elementary school years (e.g., 6 – 13) and consistently related to written expression at all ages.
	Induction (I) **Significantly related to math achievement*	Ability to discover the underlying characteristic (e.g., rule, concept, process, trend, class membership) that governs a problem or a set of materials.	Test 5: Concept Formation *Induction*				

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	**Ability**	**Definition**			**Reading**	**Math**	**Writing**
Processing Speed (Gs) **Definition:** Speed and efficiency in performing automatic or very simple cognitive tasks.	**Perceptual Speed (P)** **Significantly related to reading, math, and writing achievement*	Ability to search for and compare rapidly visual symbols presented side by side or separated in a visual field.	**Test 6: Visual Matching** *Perceptual speed* Test 16: Decision Speed *Semantic processing speed* **Test 18: Rapid Picture Naming** *Naming facility* **Extended Battery:** **Test 20: Pair Cancellation** *Attention & concentration*	**K-ABC-II** **WISC-IV** Symbol Search Coding Cancellation **WAIS-III** Symbol Search Digit Symbol Coding **WPPSI-III** Coding Symbol Search	Perceptual speed (P) is very important during all school years, particularly the elementary school years.	Perceptual speed (P) is very important during all school years, particularly the elementary school years.	Perceptual speed (P) is very important during all school years, for basic writing and related to all ages for written expression.
	Semantic Processing Speed (RA)	Speeded performance requiring encoding and mental manipulation of content.					
	Attention/ Concentration (AC)	Identified as a possible ability in some studies, may be related to personality characteristics such as carefulness or impulsivity, and/or cognitive abilities in the domain of processing speed.					

7 CHC Broad Abilities	CHC Narrow Abilities		(Basic) W-JIII Cognitive Measurement	(Advanced) Cross-Battery Cognitive Measures	Relation Between Ability and Academic Achievement		
Broad Ability	Ability	Definition			Reading	Math	Writing
Short-Term Memory (Gsm) **Definition:** The ability to hold information in immediate awareness and then use it within a few seconds, also related to working memory.	**Memory Span (MS)** ***Significant relationship to writing and to working memory in reading, math and advanced writing skills.	Ability to attend to and immediately recall temporally ordered elements in the correct order after a single presentation.	Extended Battery: Test 17: Memory for Words *Memory span*	**K-ABC-II** Number Recall Word Order Hand Movements **WISC-IV** Digit Span Letter-Number Sequencing **WAIS-III** Symbol Search Digit Symbol Coding **WPPSI-III** Coding Symbol Search	Memory span (MS) is important especially when evaluated within the context of working memory.	Memory span (MS) is important especially when evaluated within the context of working memory.	Memory span (MS) is important to writing, especially spelling skills whereas working memory has shown relations with advanced writing skills (e.g., written expression).
	Working Memory (MW)	Ability to hold information in mind for a short time while performing some operation upon it.	Test 7: Numbers Reversed *Working memory* Test 9: Auditory Working Memory				

Table summarizes information from Table 5-4. Definitions of Seven CHC Broad Abilities Measured by the WJ III Cog (p. 76) ; Table 5 – 5. Broad and Narrow Abilities Measured by the WJ III Cog (p. 76); Table 5-6.Definitions of Narrow Abilities Measured by the WJ-III Cog; Mather and Woodcock, 2001 Examiner's Manual Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Riverside Publishing and Table 2/14. Summary of Findings on Relations between CHC Abilities and Academic Achievement (p. 45), Flanagan, et al. (2006) The Achievement Test Desk Reference: A Guide to Learning Disability Identification, John Wiley & Sons, New Jersey. Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso (2007) Essentials of Cross-Battery Assessment: 2nd Education. John Wiley and Sons. Hoboken, New Jersey.

APPENDIX C

Exploring Consistencies: Summary of Significant Relationships between CHC Cognitive Factors and Achievement Areas

The table that follows summarizes research on the significant relationship between CHC cognitive clusters and academic achievement areas. The tables were created based on research from: McGrew, K. S. & Wendling, B. J. (2009). CHC cognitive-achievement relations: What we have learned from the past 20 years of research. (Institute for Applied Psychometrics). Retrieved September, 2009 from http://www.iapsych.com/chccogachmeta2/map.htm

Exploring Consistencies: Summary of Significant Relationships between CHC Cognitive Factors and Achievement Areas

CHC Cognitive-Achievement Relations			
Basic Reading			
Age	6-8	9-13	14-19
Broad CHC			
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc)	M	M	H
Long-Term Retrieval (Glr)	L		
Processing Speed (Gs)	M	M	
Short-term memory (Gsm)	L	H	H
Narrow CHC			
Phonetic Coding (Ga-PC)	M	M	M
General Information (Gc-K0)	L	M	M
Memory Span (Gsm-MS)		M	M
Working Memory (Gsm-MW)	M	M	M
Associative Memory (Glr-MA)	L		
Perceptual Speed (Gs-P)	L	M	L

Reading Comprehension			
Age	6-8	9-13	14-19
Broad CHC			
Auditory Processing (Ga)	M		
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc)	H	H	H
Long-term Retrieval (Glr)		L	
Short-Term Memory (Gsm)	L		L
Processing Speed (Gs)	T/S	T/S	
Fluid Reasoning (Gf)			T/S
Visual Processing (Gv)			
Narrow CHC			
Working Memory (Gsm-MW)	H	H	H
Memory Span (Gsm-MS)			M
Phonetic Coding (Ga-PC)	L	T/S	L
Meaningful Memory (Glr-MM)		H	H
Naming Facility (Glr-NA)		M	L

Basic Math			
	6-8	9-13	14-19
Broad CHC			
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc)		M	M
Fluid Reasoning (Gf)	M	M	M
Processing Speed (Gs)	M	M	M
Narrow CHC			
Phonetic Coding (Ga-PC)	M	M	T/S
Perceptual Speed (Gs-P)	H	H	H
Working Memory (Gsm-MW)	H	H	H

Math Reasoning			
	6-8	9-13	14-19
Broad CHC			
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc)	L	M	H
Fluid Reasoning (Gf)	H	H	M
Processing Speed (Gs)	M	M	
Short-Term Memory (Gsm)			L
Narrow CHC			
Phonetic Coding (Ga-PC)	M	L	L
Memory Span (Gsm-MS)	L		
Working Memory (Gsm-WM)	H	H	H

Consistency of significance: High(80% or above), Medium(50-79%), Low(30-49%), or Tentative/Speculative

Based on research from: McGrew, K. S. & Wendling, B. J. (2009). CHC cognitive-achievement relations: What we have learned from the past 20 years of research. (Institute for Applied Psychometrics). Retrieved September, 2009 from http://www.iapsych.com/chccogachmeta2/map.htm

APPENDIX D

The Relative Proficiency Index (RPI) Score

The Relative Proficiency Index score from the Woodcock-Johnson III/NU predicts a student's level of proficiency on tasks that typical age- or grade-level peers would perform with 90% proficiency. The following explanation may help with test score interpretation and the development of educationally relevant recommendations for students.

The Relative Proficiency Index (RPI) Score

The Woodcock-Johnson Relative Proficiency Index (RPI) "reflects the individual's *proficiency* on tasks which would be typically performed with 90% proficiency at that age/grade level. It presents a statement of *likely* success for similar tasks based upon performance within the tests." While percentiles and standard scores reflect relative standing in a group, they do not reflect the distance from the "average" performance. The Relative Performance Index answers the question "How far from average proficiency is a person's performance?"

The Difference Between RPI and Peer-Comparison Scores

A common misconception is that peer-comparison scores, such as standard scores or percentile ranks, indicate ability or achievement levels. In fact, this is not true. Rather, they merely show a person's rank order or "place in the line"—the position in which his or her score falls within the distribution of scores obtained by age or grade peers in the norming sample. In contrast, the RPI describes the person's level of proficiency in the skill, ability, or area of knowledge based on the probability of his or her success on a specific level of task difficulty.

For example, for a 5.5 grade level students' standard score of 79, and an 11th percentile it can be inferred that, the students performance on the BWS subtest stands 21 points below the normative average for the subtest and that, out of 100 same grade level peers, 89 of those peers would perform better on that particular subtest.
However, when that data is supplemented by the statement that he/she obtains a 3/90 on the WJ-III Basic Writing Skills subtest, it is made clear that when given a 5.5 grade level task that his/her peers would perform with 90% accuracy, the student may perform with only 3% success. The proficiency level of the student is quite low. This last statement is much more descriptive of the "real world" performance of the student and become instructionally relevant when making placement decisions.

The RPI is represented as a fraction, with the student's expected level of success as the numerator and the 90% criterion as the denominator. For example, an RPI of 60/90 suggests that the student would be about 60% successful on a task that typical peers would perform with 90% success. The RPI captures the "real world" functioning (and relative frustrations) of the student and provides meaningful and instructionally relevant data that can be immediately applied in terms of placement or instruction design. Another possible analogy is…

"…On a high school track team, almost everybody, including distance runners and competitors in the weight events, can run 200 meters pretty quickly. Therefore, running even a few percentage points slower than the typical team speed (a couple of seconds slower) would give the lumbering runner a very low percentile rank and standard score, even though the RPI would be fairly high. That slow runner would not be very many seconds behind the typical runner (fairly high RPI), but would still come in behind most of the other runners (low percentile rank and standard score). However, only a few specialists can pole vault at all, much less well. Therefore, someone might make a pathetic attempt (not as high as he or she could high jump), a dismally small fraction of the typical vaulting height (very low RPI) and still vault higher than a lot of teammates (relatively high percentile rank and standard score)…"

Reporting RPIs Using Descriptive Labels

A useful feature of the RPI as presented in the WJ-III is the choice of descriptive labels for different levels of proficiency, functioning, and development. In education, for example, "Proficiency" might be used to describe academic achievement, while "Development" might be used to describe cognitive and language abilities. "Implications" represents the individual's perceived level of difficulty or facility with the task (Schrank & Woodcock, 2002).

Sample Statements for Reporting RPIs

The following are examples of statements that might be used to describe an individual's RPIs (Mather & Jaffe, 2002, pp. 30–31). Specific wordings will vary depending on the achievement area or cognitive ability being addressed and the level of the RPI.

> Mark's level of proficiency on the Broad Mathematics cluster was limited (RPI 66/90). He is likely to find grade-level tasks requiring mathematics to be very difficult.
>
> Sam's RPI of 21/90 on the Phoneme/Grapheme cluster indicates that on similar tasks in which the average fourth-grade child would demonstrate 90% proficiency, Sam would demonstrate 21% proficiency. Sam's knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondence and spelling patterns is very limited. He is likely to find grade level reading and spelling tasks extremely difficult.
>
> Although Nicholas's standard score on the Basic Reading Skills cluster is within the average range for seventh-graders overall, his RPI (45/90) indicates that he will have considerably more difficulty than most of his grade peers in tasks requiring basic reading skills.
>
> Bryn's RPI of 98/90 on Visual-Spatial Thinking signifies advanced development. When average age peers demonstrate 90% accuracy on similar tasks, Bryn's expected accuracy would be approximately 98%. She is likely to find visual-spatial tasks very easy.
>
> *See Mather, N. & Jaffe, L. Woodcock-Johnson III Reports, Recommendations, and Strategies (2002) New York: John Wiley & Sons, Page 27 for interpretation tables.*

APPENDIX E

Procedure for Determining CALP Using the Woodcock-Johnson-III Tests

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) indicates the English language proficiency skills necessary to perform adequately in school. Because the early stages of language acquisition proceed at a rapid pace, it is essential that evaluators obtain current language proficiency testing data to differentiate challenges that stem from second language learning as opposed to learning deficits stemming from learning disability factors.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) Using Woodcock-Johnson III Tests

A Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) level can be obtained using the Woodcock-Johnson III/NU if only Verbal Comprehension is administered since this represents the Verbal Ability-Std score. In the program options section of the software, you must select CALP as the additional score so it appears in the score report.

> COG: Verbal Ability-STD, Verbal Ability-EXT, Comprehension Knowledge (Gc)
> ACH: Oral Language-Std, Oral Language-Ext. Listening, Comprehension, Broad Reading, Reading Comprehension, Broad Written Language, Written Expression, and Academic Knowledge

If using the CALP level as an indicator of proficiency, any of the above clusters can be helpful.

However, if trying to use the CALP level as eligibility score (entrance/exit criteria) then it is recommended that you use the broadest clusters available:

CALP for Oral Language use Oral Language-Extended

CALP for Reading use Broad Reading

CALP for Written Language use Broad Written Language

> *See Mather, N. & Jaffe, L. Woodcock-Johnson III Reports, Recommendations, and Strategies (2002) New York: John Wiley & Sons, Page 27 for interpretation tables.*

APPENDIX F

Language and Learning Disability

Current research places a particular emphasis on the relationship between language development and learning disability in reading, writing and mathematics. This discussion reviews important considerations relative in identifying language-based learning disability.

Language and Learning Disability

What Is a Language-Based Learning Disability?
The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) defines a language-based learning disability as "problems with age-appropriate reading, spelling, and/or writing."

The ASHA definition ties the language-based learning disability to a reading or a writing disorder. ASHA further explains this correlation by highlighting the connection between speaking and writing. Manifestations of a language-based learning disability include:

- word-finding or word-searching difficulty lags in vocabulary comprehension
- lags in recall and ability to follow directions
- lack of acquisition of rote material such as math facts and multiplication tables inability to establish sound-symbol correlations

Language skills are not only tied to the obvious areas of learning disability such as oral expression and listening comprehension. They are necessary for success in math calculation and math problem solving which are also areas of eligibility for learning disability. Please refer to the ASHA website at www.asha.org for more information.

Current research places a particular emphasis on the relationship between language development and learning disabilities in reading, writing and mathematics. Findings indicate that language-based deficits occur with greater frequency than non-verbal processing deficits among the learning disabled population.

The child's language development history is a key indicator in the diagnostic process. The following aspects are to be considered:

- listening comprehension relative to reading comprehension vocabulary
- comprehension relative to naming and word identification
- auditory processing relative to decoding abilities
- spoken language relative to written language

How Is a Language-Based Learning Disability Identified?
Response-to-intervention (RTI) procedures and curriculum-based assessments will be utilized prior to formal evaluations. A pattern of strengths and weaknesses must be documented.

Within a team approach, the speech and language pathologist can play an important role in evaluating the role of language in the learning disability. Initial observations and interviews are conducted prior to the administration of tests. School records are reviewed including scores from group-administered tests. A battery of tests will be administered to rule out language disorders that are not considered to be elements of a language-based learning disability. Disorders of pragmatics, morphology and syntax may be present in students with a language-based learning disability, but the presence of those deficits may not point directly to specific learning disability.

There may be instances where a child is so significantly speech/language disordered that the diagnosis of a specific learning disability in the area of either oral language or listening comprehension may need to be considered as a more appropriate disability category.

In addition, the team must differentiate between influences of ELL issues, the lack of exposure to a language-rich learning environment, and life-long disabilities.

The Cattell-Horn-Carroll theory of cognitive abilities is the foundation upon which the assessment process will be based. The areas that relate to CHC narrow abilities in the areas of listening comprehension and oral expression are summarized below:

Listening Comprehension

- Phonological Coding: Synthesis
- Speech Sound Discrimination
- Memory for Sound Patterns
- Memory Span
- General Sound Discrimination
- Associational Fluency
- Semantic Processing Speed
- Lexical Knowledge - Receptive
- Listening Ability
- Verbal Language Comprehension
- General Information
- Information about Culture

Oral Expression

- Writing Ability
- English Usage Knowledge
- Communicative Ability
- Oral Production and Fluency
- Lexical Knowledge – Expressive
- Semantic Processing Speed

Evaluations will be conducted at each stage of the referral process. Initially, curriculum-based assessments and group-administered achievement tests will highlight areas of strengths and weaknesses. More specific evaluation tools will be utilized at later stages in accordance with best practices for identifying language disabilities.

When Could a Language Disability Not Be Considered as a Learning Disability?

- When there are overriding issues related to general language competence such as:
    - LEP/ELL issues
    - Pure morphological deficits
    - Pure syntactic deficits
    - Pure semantic deficits (delayed vocabulary development)
    - Spatial and temporal deficits

- When the language deficits **do not** negatively affect reading, writing or math skills to the degree that those skill areas test 1.5 standard deviations below the mean for the student's age.

- When the language deficits improve over time with therapeutic intervention by a SLP such that the point will likely be reached when the language disability/delay will no longer impact educational performance.

- When the language deficits are manifested primarily in oral expression. Language comprehension, as well as, reading comprehension is adequate.

Developmental language deficits must be differentiated from life-long language disabilities. The former may be remediated via specialized instruction and increased exposure to language instruction. The latter will require therapeutic techniques for utilizing strategies to compensate for the manifestations of the language-based learning disability.

For more information on language-based learning disability, refer to the ASHA website: http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/LBLD.htm. The reader may also learn more about the relationship of CHC cognitive factors and achievement factors by visiting: www.iqscorner.com.

APPENDIX G

Stay Away From Interpretation Errors!

Stay Away From Interpretation Errors!

There are various misconceptions about SLD evaluation that diminish the validity of the eligibility decision. It is important to promote practices that are scientifically supported, evidenced-based, guided by current theory and promote involvement across multidisciplinary team members. Too often, practitioners are pressured to identify students as learning disabled to provide them with special assistance, to appease teachers, or to meet the demands of frustrated families. In these efforts, well intended evaluators have committed what is referred to by Flanagan, et al. (2007) as the "seven deadly sins". Those common errors are listed:

1. Relentless searching for intra-individual discrepancies.
2. Failure to distinguish between a "relative weakness" and a "normative weakness".
3. Obsession with the severe discrepancy calculation.
4. Belief that IQ is a near perfect predictor of any area of achievement and synonymous with "potential".
5. Failure to apply current theory and research.
6. Over-reliance on findings from single subtests and screening instruments.
7. Relying on a belief that aptitude and ability are one and the same.

It is readily apparent that the problems with previous practice, while well intended, are based on constructs of ability and discrepancy that have not held up to current research on abilities and learning disability. ***It will be important to be mindful of these interpretation fallacies when learning how to apply new principles for the analysis of pattern of strengths and weaknesses.***

References

AIMSweb. (2008) San Antonio, TX: PsychCorp. Division of Pearson Education, Inc.Retrieved on 7/14/2009 from http://www.aimsweb.com/.

American Federation of Teachers. (2008). *The Appropriate Use of Student Assessments*. Washington, DC: AFT.

American Speech and Hearing Association. (2009) *Language-Based Learning Disabilities*. Retrieved on September 1, 2009 from www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/LBLD.htm

Beaver, J. & Carter, M. (2007). *Developmental Reading Assessment*. Lebanon, IN: Pearson Education.

Bradley, R., Danielson, L. & Hallahan, D.P. (2002). *Identification of Learning Disabilities: Research to Practice*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Department of Education. (2004). *34 CFR Parts 300 and 301 - Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities: Final Rule*.

Echevarria, J., Short, D., Vogt, M.E. (2003). *Making Content Comprehensible to English Language Learners: The SIOP Model*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.

Flanagan, D.P. , Ortiz, S. O. , & Alfonso, V.C. (2007). *Essentials of Cross Battery Assessment* (2nd. Ed.). New Jersey, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Flanagan, D.P., Ortiz, S. O., Alfonso, V. C. & Mascolo, J. T. (2006). *The Achievement Test Desk Reference: A Guide to Learning Disability Identification* (2nd. Ed.). New York, N.Y.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Fletcher, J. M., Lyon, G.R., Fuchs, L.S., Barnes, M.A. (2007). *Learning Disabilities: From Identification to Intervention.* New York, N.Y.: Guilford Press.

Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (1998). Treatment validity: A unifying concept for reconceptualizing the identification of learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 13,* 204-219.

Georgia Department of Education. (2008). *Response to Intervention: Georgia's Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions.* Retrieved on June 1, 2009. http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/RTI%20The%20GA%20Student%20Achievement%20Pyramid%20of%20Interventions.pdf

Glutting, J., Watkins, M.W., & Youngstrom, E.A. (2003). Multifactored and Cross-Battery Ability Assessments: Are They Worth the Effort? In C.R. Reynolds & R. W. Kamphaus (Eds.). *Handbook of Psychological and Educational Assessment of Children: Intelligence, Aptitude, and Achievement* (2nd. Ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Glutting, J., Youngstrom, E., Ward, T., Ward, S., & Hale, R.L. (1997). Incremental efficacy of WISC-III factor scores in predicting achievement: What do they tell us? *Psychological Assessment, 9,* 295-301.

Good, R. H. & Kaminski, R. (2009). *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)*. Oregon: Dynamic Measurement Group. Retrieved on June 1, 2009 from http://www.dibels.org/index.html.

Gravois, T. A. & Gickling, E.E. (2002). Best practices in curriculum-based assessment. In Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (Eds.) *Best Practices in School Psychology IV*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Gresham, F. (2001) *Responsiveness to Intervention: An alternative approach to the identification of learning disabilities.* Paper presented at the Learning Disabilities Summit: Building a Foundation for the Future, Washington, DC.

Hale, B., Naglieri, J. A., Kaufman, A. S. & Kavale, K. A. (2004). Specific learning disability classification in the new Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The danger of good ideas. *The School Psychologist, 58*, 6-13.

Hanson, J. (2008) Pattern of Strength and Weakness in SLD Evaluations: What's It All About? Power Point Presentation from Oregon School Psychologist Association, retrieved on April 10, 2009 from http://ospa.wildapricot.org/Default.aspx?pageId=417777

Hanson, J., Sharman, L.A., & Esparza-Brown, J. (2009) Pattern of Strength and Weakness in SLD Evaluations: What's It All About? Technical Assistance Paper from Oregon School Psychologist Association, retrieved on April 10, 2009 from http://ospa.wildapricot.org/Default.aspx?pageId=417777

Hresko, W. Herrons, S. & Peak, P.C. (1996). Test of Early Written Language (TEWL-2). San Antonio, TX: Pearson Education, Inc.

Idaho Department of Education. (2009). *Response to Intervention – Idaho: Connecting the Pieces*. Retrieved on September 9, 2009 from http://www.sde.idaho.gov.

Indiana State Board of Education. (2008). *Special Education Rules Title 511 Article 7 Rules.* Retrieved on May 10, 2009 from http://www.islha.org/Content/Documents/Document.ashx?DocId=36789.

Jaffe, L.E. (2009). *Development, Interpretation, and Application of the W Score and the Relative Proficiency Index*. Woodcock-Johnson® III Assessment Service Bulletin Number 11. Rolling Meadows, IL., Riverside Publishing.

Johnson, L. & Protheroe, N. (2003). *What we know about culture and learning.* Educational Research Service, 2000 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201-2908. Phone: 800-791-9308. Fax: 800-791-9309.

Joint Committee American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education. (2004). Standards *for Educational and Psychological Testing.* Washington, D.C.: AERA Publications.

Kaufman, A. S., & Kaufman, N. L. (2001). Assessment of specific learning disabilities in the new millennium: Issues, conflicts, and controversies. In A. S. Kaufman, & N. L. Kaufman (Eds.), *Specific*

Learning Disabilities and Difficulties in Children and Adolescents: Psychological Assessment and Evaluation (pp. 433-461). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Kaufman, A. S., & Kaufman, N. L. (Eds.) (2001a). *Specific learning disabilities and difficulties in children and adolescents: Psychological assessment and evaluation.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Kavale, K. A. (1995). Setting the record straight on learning disability and low achievement: The tortuous path of ideology. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 10,* 145-152.

Kavale, K. A. (2002). Discrepancy models in the identification of learning disability. In R. Bradley, L. Danielson, & D. P. Hallahan (Eds.). *Identification of learning disabilities: Research to practice* (pp. 369-426). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kavale, K. (2003). *The Feasibility of a Responsiveness to Intervention Approach for The Identification of Specific Learning Disability: A Psychometric Alternative*. Paper presented at Responsiveness-to-Intervention Symposium**:** Kansas City, Missouri.

Kavale, K.A., Holdnack, J.A., & Mostert, M.P. (2005). Responsiveness to intervention and the identification of specific learning disability: A critique and alternative proposal. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 28*, 2-16.

Kozleski, E. (2009). *How early intervention transforms practice: Equity as an education imperative*. National Association of School Psychologists Summer Institute. Equity Alliance, Arizona State University. Retrieved on October 15, 2009 from http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/sites/default/files/Website_files/NASP72209EarlyInterveningEquity.pdf

Kraft, C, (2007). (Ed.) *What Do I Do When….The Answer Book on RtI.* Arlington, VA: LRP Publications**.**

Lyon, G.R. (2002). Reading development, reading difficulties, and reading instruction: Educational and public health issues. *Journal of School Psychology, 40*, 3-6.

Mather, N. & Jaffe, L. (2002). *Woodcock-Johnson III: Reports, Recommendations, and Strategies*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Mather, N. & Woodcock, R. W. (2001) *Examiner's Manual - Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement*. Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Mather, N. & Woodcock, R. W. (2001a) *Examiner's Manual. Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities.* Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

McGrew, K. (2003) *Understanding the WJ RPI Scores and Their Relation to Standard Scores Power Point* retrieved June 2nd, 2009 from http://iapsych.com/rpiss_files/frame.htm

McGrew, K. S. & Wendling, B. J. (2009). *CHC cognitive-achievement relations: What we have learned from the past 20 years of research.* Institute for Applied Psychometrics. Retrieved September, 2009

from http://www.iapsych.com/chccogachmeta2/map.html

Meehan, M.L., Cowley, K.S., Finch, N.L. ,Chadwick, K.l., Ermolov, L.D. & Riffle, M.J. (2004). *Special Strategies Observation System-Revised: A Useful Tool for Educational Research and Evaluation*. Institute of Education Sciences - U.S. Department of Education. Charleston, WV: AEL.

Michigan Department of Education. (2009) Office of Education Assessment and Accountability. Michigan Education Assessment Program. Retrieved on August 1, 2009 from http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_31168---,00.html.

Michigan Department of Education - Office of School Improvement. (2004). *English Language Learner Proficiency Standards for K-12 Schools.* Retrieved on October 2, 2009 from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/English_Language_Proficiency_K-12_Standards_103705_7.pdf

Michigan Department of Education. Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services. (2009) *Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education Supplemented with IDEA Federal Regulations.* Retrieved on April 5, 2009 from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MARSE-April09_274156_7.pdf

Michigan Department of Education. (1996) *Michigan Curriculum Framework.* Retrieved on August 5, 2009 from http://michigan.gov/documents/MichiganCurriculumFramework_8172_7.pdf

Michigan Department of Education. (2009). *Website resources for English Language Learners.* Retrieved on July 20, 2009 from http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_30334_40078---,00.html

Michigan State Board of Education & Michigan Department of Education. Office of Professional Preparation Services. (2005). *Michigan Standards for Ensuring Excellent Educators.* Retrieved on October 19, 2009 from www.michigan.gov/mde

National Association of State Directors of Special Education. (2008) *Response to Intervention: Blueprints for Implementation*. Retrieved on May 5, 2009 from http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/DISTRICT.pdf

National Center on Response to Intervention Progress Monitoring Tools; Retrieved on June 5, 2009 from http://www.rti4success.org/chart/progressMonitoring/progressmonitoringtoolschart.htm#

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities. Retrieved on April 9, 2009 from http://www.nrcld.org/

New Mexico Public Education Department. (2006). *Response to Intervention: A Systematic Process to Increase Learning Outcomes for All Students - Guidance Document for New Mexico.* Santa Fe, NM: Retrieved on May 5, 2009 from www.ped.state.nm.us.

New Mexico Public Education Department. (2009). *Response to Intervention. Improving Achievement for All Students. Policy, Guidance, Publications*. Retrieved on May 5, 2009 from http://www.ped.state.nm.us/RtI/rule.html

New Mexico Public Education Department. (2007). *Student Assistance Team and the Three Tier Model of Student Intervention*. Santa Fe, N.M.: www.ped.state.nm.us/qab/downloads/sat/file2.pdf.

New Mexico Public Education Department. (2009). *Understanding and Implementing the Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework in New Mexico: A Quick Guide*. New Mexico Public Education Department.

Newborg, J. (2005). *Battelle Developmental Inventory* (2nd. Ed.). Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Nieto, S. & Bode, P. (2008). *Affirming Diversity – The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (2007). *Guidelines: Identification and Evaluation of Students with Learning Disabilities.* U.S. Office of Special Education.

Paul, R. (2006). *Language Disorders from Infancy through Adolescence: Assessment and Intervention*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Rhodes,R.L., Ochoa,S. H. & Ortiz, S. O. (2005) *Assessing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: A Practical Guide*. New York: The Guildford Press.

San Diego County Office of Education. (2005). Adapted from: Schmoker, M.J. (1999). *Results- The Key to Continuous School Improvement. (2nd. Ed.)* Virginia, VA.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Schmoker, M.J. (1999). *Results, 2nd Edition, The Key to Continuous School Improvement.* Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development)

Schrank, F. A. (2006). *Specification of the Cognitive Processes Involved in Performance on the Woodcock-Johnson III - Assessment Service Bulletin Number 7.* Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Schrank, F. A. & Flanagan, D.P. (2003). *WJ-III Clinical Use and Interpretation*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Schrank, F.A & Wendling, B.J. (2009) *Educational Interventions and Accommodations Related to the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities and the Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Supplement to the Tests of Cognitive Abilities - Assessment Service Bulletin Number 10.* Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Schultz, E. (2005). *SLD Evaluation: Linking cognitive assessment data to learning strategies.* Learning Disabilities Association of America News Brief. Retrieved on July 10, 2009 from http://www.ldanatl.org/newsbriefs/print_index.asp

Special Education Bilingual-Bicultural Committee. (2005) *Screening, Interventions and Pre-Referral Procedures for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students. Retrieved on September 10,* 2009 from http://www.asdk12.org/depts/ell/SpEd/SpEd_ProcedureManual.pdf.

Stanovich, K. E. (2005). The future of a mistake: Will discrepancy measurement continue to make the learning disabilities field a pseudoscience? *Learning Disability Quarterly, 28*, 103-106

State of Washington. (2006) *Using Response to Intervention (RtI) for Washington's Students.* Retrieved April 28, 2009 from specialed@ospi.wednet.edu**.**

Steubing, K., Fletcher, J.M., LeDoux, J.M., Lyon, G.R., Shaywitz, S.E., & Shaywitz, B.A. (2002). Validity of IQ-discrepancy classifications of reading disabilities: A meta-analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 39,* 469-518.

Texas Commissioner's Rules Guidance: Eligibility Criteria (89.1040). Retrieved on July 10, 2009 from http://ritter.tea.state.rx.us/special.ed/guidance/rules/89/1040.html

Velluntino, F.R., Scanlan, D.M., Lyon, G.R. (2000). *Differentiating between difficult-to-remediate and readily remediated poor readers: more evidence against the IQ-achievement discrepancy definition of reading disability.* Albany, N.Y. :Child and Research Study Center

Wayne County RtI/LD Committee. (2007). *Field Guides to Response to Intervention*. Wayne, MI: Wayne Regional Education Service Agency. http://www.resa.net/curriculum/rti/

Wayne County Committee for Specific Learning Disabilities (2009). *Guidance for the Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities*. Wayne, MI: Wayne Regional Education Service Agency http://www.resa.net/services/spedcompliance/learningdisabilities/

Wechsler, D. (2003). *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children* (4th Ed.). San Antonio, TX: Pearson. www.PsychCorp.com.

Woodcock, R. W., McGrew, K.S., & Mather, N. (2001).*Woodcock-Johnson III*. Rolling Meadows, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Lapeer County Intermediate School District

1196 West Oregon Road · Lapeer, MI 48446

810-664-5917 · 810-664-1011 fax · www.lcisd.k12.mi.us

This manual is meant to serve as a practical guide for implementing IDEA and its regulations. It is not intended to state new law or supplant any federal or state laws, regulations, or requirements. Nothing in this manual should be seen as having the force of law. This manual should not be cited as law or as imposing any additional requirements or obligations outside the requirements of existing law. Systems, schools, and parents are not required to adhere to this manual, but only to the requirements of IDEA as codified in 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., its regulations promulgated in 34 C.F.R Parts 300 and 301, and the rules of the State of Michigan and the State Board of Education.