

Board of Education Regular Meeting

February 13, 2018 6:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR Procedural Item	Chair Butch Campbell
A. Pledge of Allegiance Procedural Item The Pledge of Allegiance will be led by Kayla Hamilton, a 5th grade student from Scales Elementary, Ruby Fournier, a kindergarten student from Scales Elementary, and Alex Morgan, a 3rd grade student also from Scales Elementary. Also leading the pledge will be Diora Webb, a 6th grade student from Discovery School.	Chair Butch Campbell
B. Moment of Silence Procedural Item	Chair Butch Campbell
II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
III. COMMUNICATIONS Information Item Many thanks to the Extended School Program for recognizing our School Board members at the last meeting by creating and displaying posters at that meeting. Mitchell Neilson would like to thank Newk’s Eatery at the Avenue for donating lunch for the parent panel and Lighthouse review Team. Newk’s and the O’Reilly family are fabulous community partners. Mitchell-Neilson would like to thank Morter Family Chiropractic for providing lunch to MNS teachers. Northfield Elementary would like to thank Harvest View Church and a group of Unite youth for showing love to our students and staff. They came over the weekend and wiped down desk and knobs as their project. They also left a sucker for students and a little gift for the teacher on their desk. We thank them so much for loving on us. Congratulations to Discovery’s robotics team who placed second in the “Innovation Solution Award” at the FIRST Lego League East Tennessee Championship Tournament on Saturday. This was their first time competing. Congratulations to the MCS Competition Cheer Team who placed fourth in the nation in Orlando on Sunday. This culminates weeks and weeks of work with support from schools, parents, and grandparents. Congratulations to Mitchell-Neilson. They have achieved Lighthouse Status as a Leader In Me School. While there are 3,160 Leader In Me Schools in the world, only 352 have made it to Lighthouse Status. Several schools be competing in the Invention Convention next week on the 22 nd at MTSU in the Student Union Building. Judging will begin at about 9:00, with awards announced about 11:30. The following schools will be participating: Bradley, Cason Lane, Discovery, Hobgood, Northfield, Overall, Pittard, Scales, and Siegel. Murfreesboro City Schools would like to thank New Hope Church of God in Christ for their donation to purchase Rover tickets.	Mrs. Lisa Trail

<p>Additional donations have been made to the Indigent Care Fund in memory of Mrs. Linda Cox. Thank you to all who have donated. Congratulations to Angela Fairchild and the Murfreesboro City Schools' Special Education Team. A Letter of Local Determination was recently received that indicated the requirements for the implementation of IDEA Part B have been met.</p> <p>Congratulations to Tammy Pirtle, Academic Coach at Black Fox Elementary School, who has been nominated for the 2017-2018 National LifeChanger of the Year award. Sponsored by the National Life Group Foundation, LifeChanger of the Year recognizes and rewards the very best K-12 educators and school district employees across the United States who are making a difference in the lives of students by exemplifying excellence, positive influence and leadership.</p> <p>February 6th and 7th, members of the Murfreesboro City Schools family were involved in five presentations at the Tennessee Department of Education Partners In Education Conference. The following presentations were made:</p> <p><u>Toolkit to Improve School Climate</u> - Kim Frank (3 sessions)</p> <p><u>Focusing on the Continuum of Services for Preschool Students</u> - Roxana Dove, Kelley Heflin, Lynn Hood, & Kelly Blanchard</p> <p><u>A Positive Impact on School Climate Using RTI²-Behavior</u> - Amanda Adams & Kim Frank (2 sessions)</p> <p><u>Improving School Culture Through Response to Instruction and Intervention for Behavior (RTI²-B)</u> - Angela Huff & Amanda Turnbo</p> <p><u>Successful Implementation of RTI² in Murfreesboro City Schools</u> - Jess Grayum & Tara Bowker</p> <p>Congratulations to the schools whose work has been acknowledged by the Tennessee Behavior Project for their RTI² B implementation. Report by Kim Frank.</p> <p>Over the past few months, the Tennessee Department of Education has been conducting a qualitative research study to understand how RTI² has affected the learning disability identification process and whether the implementation of RTI² has led to different outcomes in terms of determining eligibility. As part of that work, the Department of Education visited Scales Elementary School and observed their data meetings. They also interviewed Caresa Dodson and Angela Fairchild to discuss district-level RTI² practices. All of this was integrated into the department's latest report, <i>Assessing Progress: Four Years of Learnings from RTI² Implementation in Tennessee</i>. That report was released on February 5th in an event at the Music City Center. According to the state, Scales informed the "look fors" regarding effective implementation of intervention as well as being the basis for the "Robust Support at the District Level" case study portion of the report. Report by Caresa Dodson and Maria Johnson.</p>	
<p>IV. CONSENT ITEMS Action Item</p>	<p>Chair Butch Campbell</p>
<p>A. Approval of School Fees Action Item</p>	<p>Chair Butch Campbell</p>
<p>B. Minutes 1-23-18 Board Meeting Action Item</p>	<p>Chair Butch Campbell</p>
<p>V. ACTION ITEMS Action Item</p>	<p>Chair Butch Campbell</p>

A. First Reading of Board Policies Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
i. Board Policy 3.100 Business Management Goals Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
ii. Board Policy 3.200 Building and Grounds Management Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
iii. Board Policy 3.300 Equipment and Supplies Management Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
iv. Board Policy 6.100 Student Goals Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
v. Board Policy 6.308 Bus Safety and Conduct Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
vi. Board Policy 6.310 Dress Code Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
vii. Board Policy 6.314 Corporal Punishment Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
viii. Board Policy 6.504 Migrant Students Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
B. Resolution Concerning Nurses Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
C. Resolution Concerning RTI Positions Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
VI. REPORTS AND INFORMATION Information Item	Dr. Linda Gilbert
A. Enrollment (PTR) Report Information Item	Mr. Gary Anderson
VII. OTHER BUSINESS Information Item	Chair Butch Campbell
VIII. ADJOURNMENT Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell

An Overview of RTI²-B in Tennessee

**Tennessee Behavior Supports Project
Vanderbilt University**

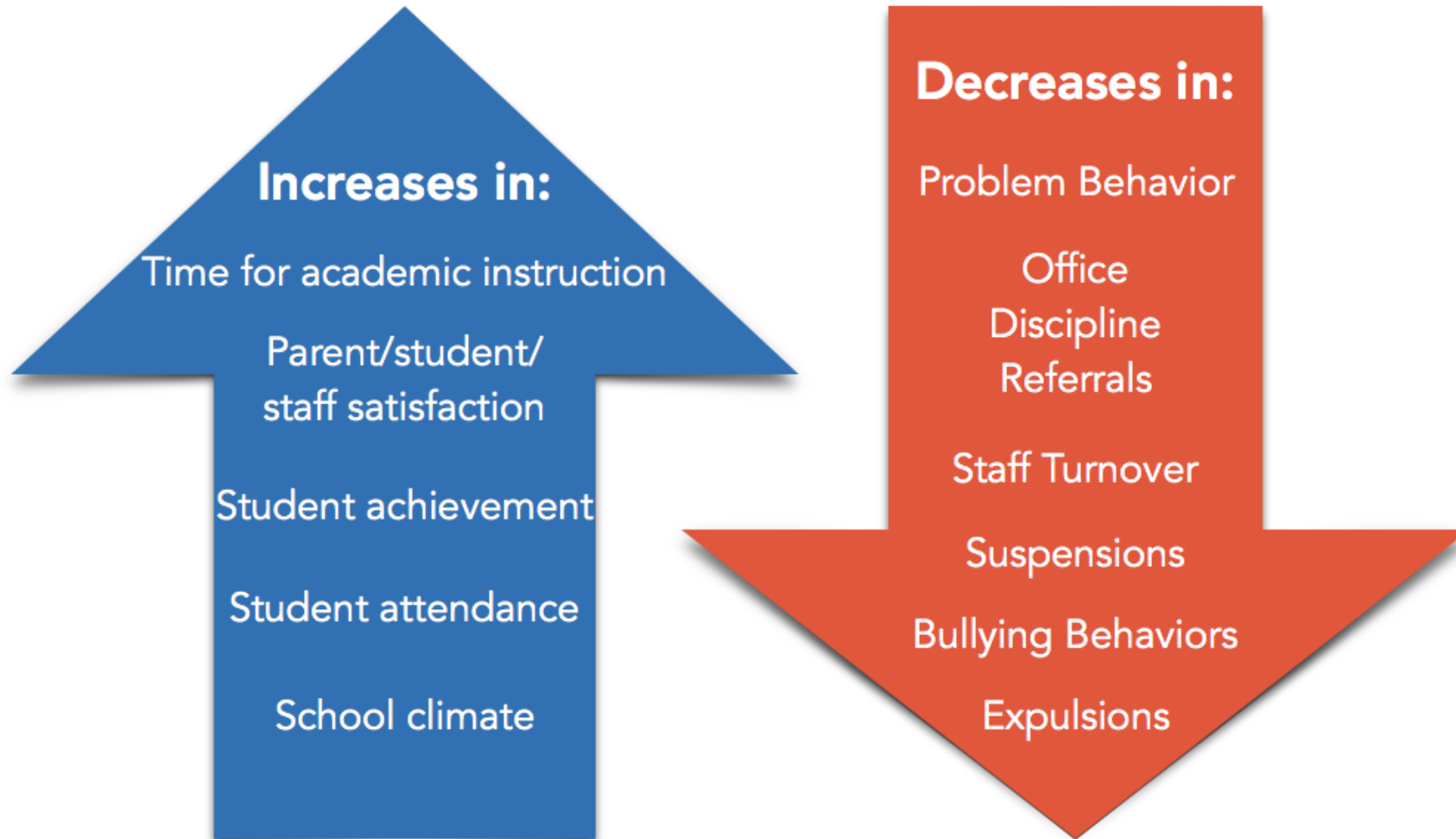
What is RTI²-B?

An instructional approach to behavior and social emotional development

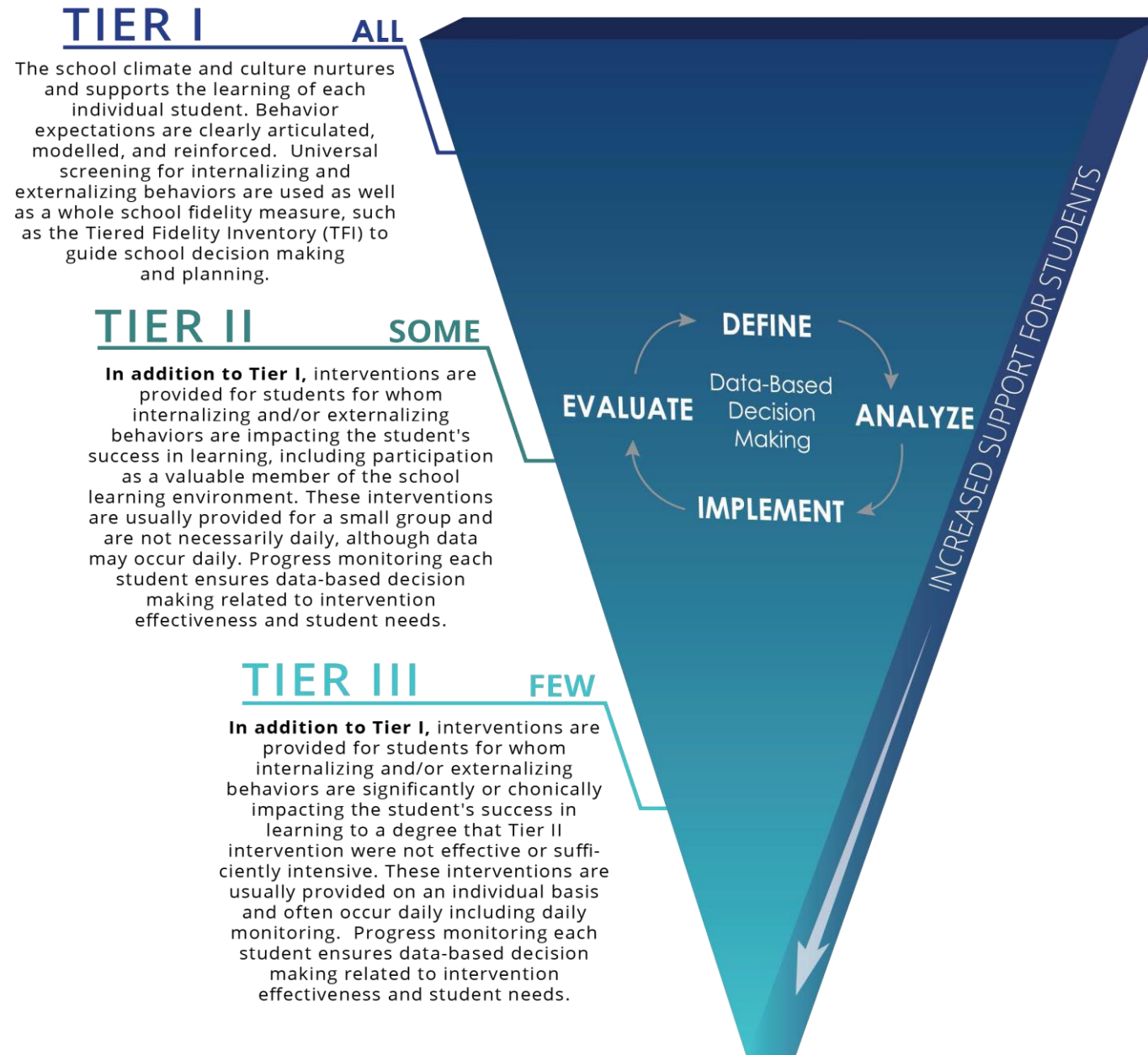
Focuses on preventing behavior concerns

Cohesive plan for a sustainable framework to support students emotionally and behaviorally

Benefits of RTI²-B



Tennessee RTI²-B Model





Tier I

Primary prevention for **all students**, approximately 80% of students respond to this level



Tier 2

Targeted interventions to address groups of students (5-10%) who are not responding to Tier 1 supports.



Tier 3

Individualized interventions to address the few students (3-5%) not responding to Tier I and Tier II supports.

ASSESSING PROGRESS



Four Years of Learnings from RTI² Implementation in Tennessee

February 2018

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Executive Summary

IN 2014, TENNESSEE LAUNCHED A STATEWIDE initiative known as Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) aimed at better supporting students' individual learning needs. RTI² is a framework for teaching and learning that includes regular screenings to identify student areas of need and a tiered model of intervention for those that need additional help. In Tennessee, it is also used to determine the eligibility of students to receive special education services for specific learning disabilities (SLD).

This report describes the Tennessee Department of Education's reflections and conclusions from the last several years of RTI² in Tennessee.

Since RTI² was first implemented in Tennessee, we have seen significant drops in the number of students identified with an SLD and a substantial

rise in the equity of identification across different student subgroups.

We believe RTI² continues to be the right framework for our state, both to keep students from slipping through the cracks and to provide a set of flexible structures to support students who need additional instruction in certain areas.

However, we also have heard from educators in schools where RTI² has not felt like a worthwhile investment and we have seen considerable variation in the quality of implementation across the state. While we remain fully committed to the work, we are also learning from these challenges and are working to address specific needs. As a result, we propose several changes designed to capitalize on our learning and to support the strongest versions of RTI².

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Easing the burden of RTI² guidelines:

- A simplified RTI² framework that aims to clarify the set of RTI² requirements and flexibilities at all grade bands.
- Proposed modifications to the framework itself that aim to reduce implementation challenges across Tennessee schools.

2 Enhancing support and resources for district RTI² implementation:

- A legislative funding request to better support RTI² staffing in all Tennessee districts.
- Additional resources, trainings, and feedback tools for districts and schools to assess the strength of their own RTI² practices.

3 Differentiating RTI² for high schools:

- A listening tour to define new guidance and resources for high school implementation.
- Communities of practice that support high school RTI² design.

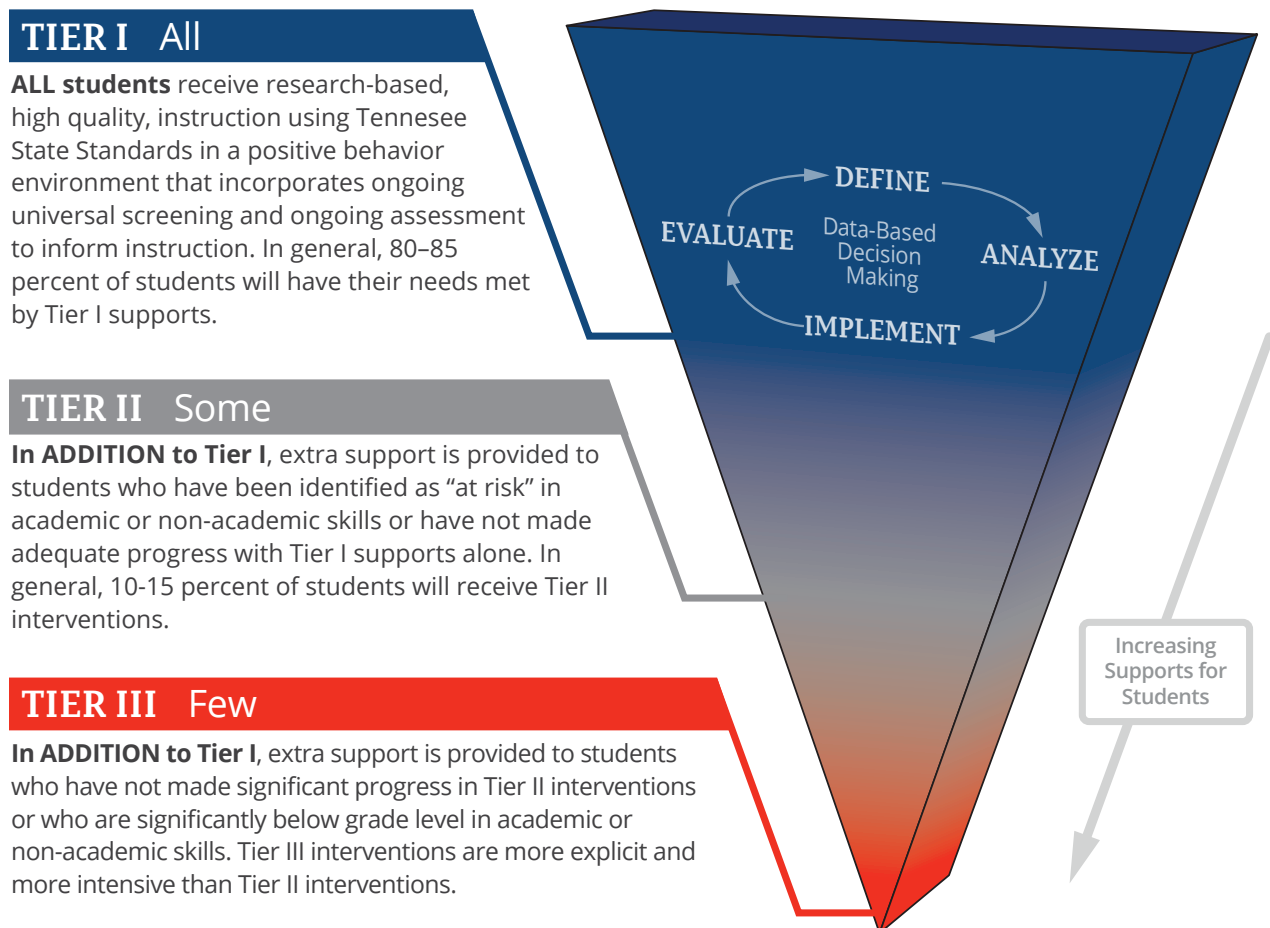
NEXT STEPS

This coming spring, representatives from the department will tour the state to discuss potential improvements to our state guidance on RTI² and describe the series of proposed changes. These changes are meant to improve the manageability of the system and cut down on unintended consequences while taking into account the continued need for equity in SLD identification, for more effective intervention practices, and for stronger, data-driven instruction.

FIGURE 1 What is Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²)?

RTI² is a system that demands collaborative, co-ordinated planning; valid assessment of student progress; and strong instructional practices. Implementation of the RTI² framework starts with a universal screening process for every student that provides baseline data to help schools' RTI² teams determine which level of intervention each student requires. All students receive scaffolded Tier I core instruction that is differentiated according to student need. Students who are significantly below grade level in an academic area or who are not responding to Tier I instruction might receive either Tier II or more intensive Tier III interventions. Once

students begin receiving interventions, schools monitor progress regularly and participate in data-based decision-making. Students move in and out of tiers based on their current level of need, with Tier II and III interventions directly addressing existing skill deficits so that students are better prepared to access Tier I core instruction. While implementing the framework, schools are expected to offer comprehensive training so that staff fully understand the expectations of RTI² and can subsequently provide cohesive, meaningful support to all students.



Introduction

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, AS TENNESSEE ROLLED out new academic standards, the state confronted a two-part problem.

First, there was ample evidence that lower-performing students were not making the progress they needed to access grade-level material, an issue that was only likely to worsen given the more rigorous demands of the new standards.

Second, data suggested that a large contingent of struggling students were being identified with a specific learning disability (SLD) for reasons that were as likely to be related to unmet instructional needs as they were to any definite disability. The result was that poor, minority, and male students were highly overrepresented in the special education population, and they were disproportionately likely to receive a disability label that would then stick with them throughout their school career.

These two concerns led the Tennessee State Board of Education to adopt Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) in July 2014.

This move to a new model for SLD identification required schools to show evidence that students had received a series of increasingly intensive, targeted interventions based on individual needs before becoming eligible for special education.

More broadly, RTI² aimed to institutionalize a powerful theory of student progress. If schools were regularly screening all students for skill gaps and if student remediation could be increasingly personalized toward individual needs, core instruction could be more effective. Regular

meetings to evaluate student progress would create close interactions between academic support staff and ensure that all schools had the structures and routines in place to keep students from slipping through the cracks.

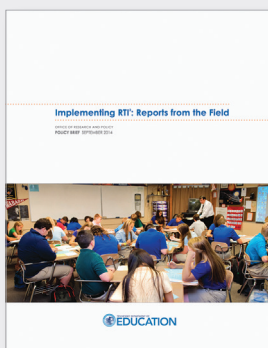
We cannot overstate the impact of this work. Implementation of RTI² has led to tremendous changes in Tennessee schools and classrooms, especially at the elementary level where rollout first took place. Schools have shifted staff positions to fill instructional needs; schedules were altered to incorporate additional time for intervention periods; assessment tools were purchased to gauge student needs and student progress within interventions, and schools have reconfigured professional development and meeting structures to incorporate RTI² data needs.

Three years in, the time is right to assess long-term progress on the initiative. What have we learned across the course of this work? Where have we succeeded, and where have we fallen short in addressing the original problem? Most importantly, how can this learning translate into programmatic change that might improve the pace of progress in the coming years?

This report offers a reflection moment, a chance to look across several years of implementation of a massive statewide reform to determine the right next steps. It also offers an opportunity to take greater ownership of the department's mission of continuous improvement so that, rather than pivoting from solution to solution, we improve current initiatives by building on progress and learning from areas of need.

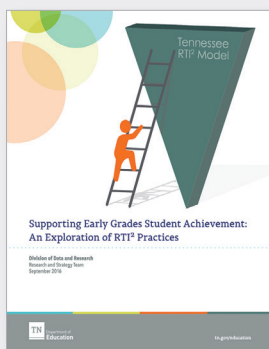
Read More about RTI² Implementation From Past Reports

<https://www.tn.gov/education/data/research-and-policy-briefs.html>



Implementing RTI²: Reports from the Field

This report was released in September 2014 prior to statewide implementation of Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) to assess readiness for implementation. Department research staff interviewed district and school leaders from 14 schools in 7 districts across the state. Nearly all of the district and school administrators that we spoke with demonstrated a remarkably strong knowledge of the state's RTI² framework. At the time, most districts were focused on identifying screeners and progress monitoring tools, and few had reached the point where they were thinking deeply about the interventions that would take place once deficits were identified. Schools and districts reported that their primary challenges were scheduling, resources, and blending the silos of general and special education in order to create the collaboration needed for strong RTI² implementation. We also noted that, for some districts and schools, the RTI² framework was entirely new but that others had used some version of it for several years, often in select grades or subjects, and we recommended greater differentiation of department RTI² support.



Supporting Early Grades Student Achievement: An Exploration of RTI² Practices

Two years after our first RTI² report, the department released a second report focused on quality of implementation. The report used evidence from the 2015 Tennessee Educator Survey to identify schools that had strong implementation across the RTI² key readiness areas and addressed the following question: "What differentiates the high implementers that are more successful than others at moving non-proficient students to proficiency?" On the surface, we found that implementation of key RTI² practices looked similar across high implementing schools. Staff at these schools conducted universal screening three times per year, monitored the progress of students receiving Tier II or III interventions at least every two weeks, met regularly to review data, and received training related to RTI² implementation. Yet, we found that some of the high implementers were far more successful than others at moving students to proficiency ("big movers"). The "big movers" used multiple data sources and constant communication among staff members to guide the RTI² decision-making process; built strong RTI² teams with specialized role-players who were well-equipped to support student success; used all available resources to create staggered, grade-level intervention periods and allocate space for small group work; and had strong leaders who encouraged collective responsibility and engagement and learned from the early stages of RTI² implementation to make changes and improve.

CASE STUDY An RTI² Data Team Meeting in Action

“Look Fors” for Effective RTI² Data Team Meetings

The following case study illustrates an essential component of RTI²—a data team meeting where staff gather to discuss student progress. Structured processes and invested staff members lead to productive conversations that drive student learning. **Look for the following features—based on prior research—of an effective RTI² data team meeting:**

- 1 The meeting includes the right stakeholders and begins with everyone on the same page about the **goals** of the meeting.
- 2 Clear **targets** are agreed on for student growth.
- 3 Each **individual student’s data is examined** in turn and the team discusses students’ areas of strength and weakness related to the identified skill deficit.
- 4 The team considers the possibility that the intervention is **not a good match** for a student’s particular needs.
- 5 The team takes a problem-solving approach to discussions of individual students and concludes each conversation with **concrete action steps**.

It’s the first RTI² data team meeting of the school year at Minglewood Elementary, a large and diverse school in Montgomery County where around 50 percent of students are economically disadvantaged. Because the school building is undergoing renovations, around a dozen staff members—teachers, interventionists, administrators, and the school psychologist—huddle together in a cramped office to review student data. There isn’t enough space for a projector, so everyone is equipped with notebooks containing charts and notes for each student who will be discussed.

- 1 Assistant Principal Helen Nicholas begins the meeting by **stating the purpose**: to review student progress and determine if each student is matched to an appropriate intervention that addresses his or her specific skill deficit. At this first meeting, students only have 4–5 data points, so Mrs. Nicholas clarifies that the team will not yet be moving students between tiers as interventions have not been in place long enough to make decisions with confidence. Mrs. Nicholas hands out a list of all the students in this grade level who are currently receiving Tier II or III interventions. The list is clearly delineated by tier and by the group’s specific skill deficit, with headings such as letter/sound identification, decoding, fluency, addition, etc.

An interventionist kicks off the discussion by speaking briefly about a second grade Tier II intervention group she has been working with on fluency at the subword level. She specifies the intervention she has been providing as well as how she is monitoring progress. In this case the group, which is less than one grade level behind, has been receiving a systematic phonics intervention program and monitoring progress with weekly grade-level oral reading fluency (ORF) probes. The interventionist clarifies that the **grade-level target for this group** is 55 words read correctly per minute (WCPM). She reports that the entire group is showing improvement to varying degrees with the

exception of a single progress monitoring data point, which was collected immediately following the district's fall break, resulting in an uncharacteristic dip in performance for all the students in the group. The interventionist notes this in advance so the team can be aware of the anomaly as they examine individual student data.

Next, the team proceeds to **examine each individual student's data in turn**. For each student they first refer to the previously established metric (i.e., WCPM), then to the student's chart and trend line in the data notebook, so that every team member can tell if the student in question is on track to reach the goal (i.e., "Sally was at 20, now she is at 35."). The student's interventionist and/or classroom teacher provides additional formative assessment data, such as measures of sight word vocabulary or word attack skills. The team then **discusses the student's areas of strength and weakness related to the identified skill deficit**: one student struggles to blend letter sounds, another is not familiar with digraphs, another still struggles with letter-sound correspondences but compensates with a large sight word vocabulary.

3

Some students show adequate growth that indicates they are on pace to catch up to their peers; others show growth that is inadequate. If growth is inadequate, or if the classroom teacher indicates that growth is not translating to Tier I instruction, **the team considers the possibility that the intervention is not a good match for this student's particular needs**. They ask questions like, "What is the root cause of this student's skill deficit?", "Do we need more diagnostic information about this student?", "Does this intervention hone in enough on the specific skill deficit?", or "Is there better way we could be addressing this student's needs?" They shuffle groups or change interventions as needed to make sure they are meeting the needs of all students.

4

When relevant to the student's specific skill deficit, team members often share non-academic factors impacting their academic success. For example if the team suspects that the student's skill deficit may be related to his or her English proficiency, a team member is designated as the liaison to consult with the school's ESL teacher. Other issues that come up include students with ADHD, students who rarely bring their glasses to school, and students with severe behavior issues. As these topics arise, **the team takes a frank, problem-solving approach that concludes with concrete action steps from one or more team members**.

5

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants recap their individual action steps. One teacher verifies all the shifting of students and/or interventions that were decided during the meeting. Another teacher who has been drafting parent contact letters during the meeting asks clarification questions. This was one in a series of grade-level data team meetings that would take place throughout the day. In four to five weeks, the same group will gather again with more information, this time to discuss the potential of moving individual students between tiers of intervention. They will follow a similar structure, working together methodically and fluidly to ensure that they are meeting the individual needs of students.

Assessing the Impact

THE STATEWIDE ROLLOUT OF RTI² TO ELEMENTARY schools during the 2014–15 school year initiated a period of significant and often challenging realignment.

District-level staff, school administrators, and teachers began the iterative process of reevaluating and restructuring their practices to align with the newly implemented framework. Following the first year of implementation, most elementary school teachers reported that their schools were either fully or partially implementing the core components of RTI²: they were using a universal screener, had established a daily intervention period, had formed a RTI² data team, were delivering RTI²-related staff training, and were regularly monitoring student progress.

To help with RTI² implementation, districts turned to outside vendors for screening instruments, intervention programs, and progress monitoring tools. AIMSweb, STAR, and easyCBM are the most common vendors with nearly 90 percent of districts contracting with one of these three companies. Districts also shifted staff assignments to fulfill the new demands. Currently, almost all districts report a staff roster that includes full or part-time interventionists, with over one-third of districts reporting full-time interventionists in every building.

In subsequent years, RTI² implementation began in middle schools (2015–16) and in high schools (2016–17), ushering in further shifts in school and classroom practices.

These changes amount to tremendous and potentially far-reaching shifts in school and classroom processes. But what did they mean for students?

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The most concrete success story of RTI² implementation is a more equitable system of special education identification. Since RTI² implementation, Tennessee has seen a significant decline in the number of students identified with an SLD in ways that improve equity statewide.

RTI² moved Tennessee away from a discrepancy model, sometimes called a “wait to fail” approach, where SLD identification was based on a discrepancy between a student’s actual and predicted achievement according to his/her cognitive abilities. In the new model of tiered support, students receive increasingly intensive interventions based on need before being identified with a disability.¹

Under the previous model, SLD identifications made up about one-third of all new special education identifications, and around 15 students within every 1,000 were identified annually with an SLD. These numbers had stayed constant for years, marking relatively high numbers of students with a disability label that followed them through their schooling career. The SLD identification rate for male students was twice as high as the rate for female students, and the rate for minority students was around 1.5 times higher than the rate for non-minority students.

Following RTI²’s statewide rollout, SLD identifications across the state dropped to 5 per 1,000 students. Numbers rebounded slightly the following years to around 9 students per 1,000, still representing a significant drop from the pre-RTI² total (Figure 2). Equally important, the identification gaps by gender and racial subgroups mostly disappeared. Since the implementation of RTI²,

FIGURE 2 SLD Identification Rates in Grades K-5

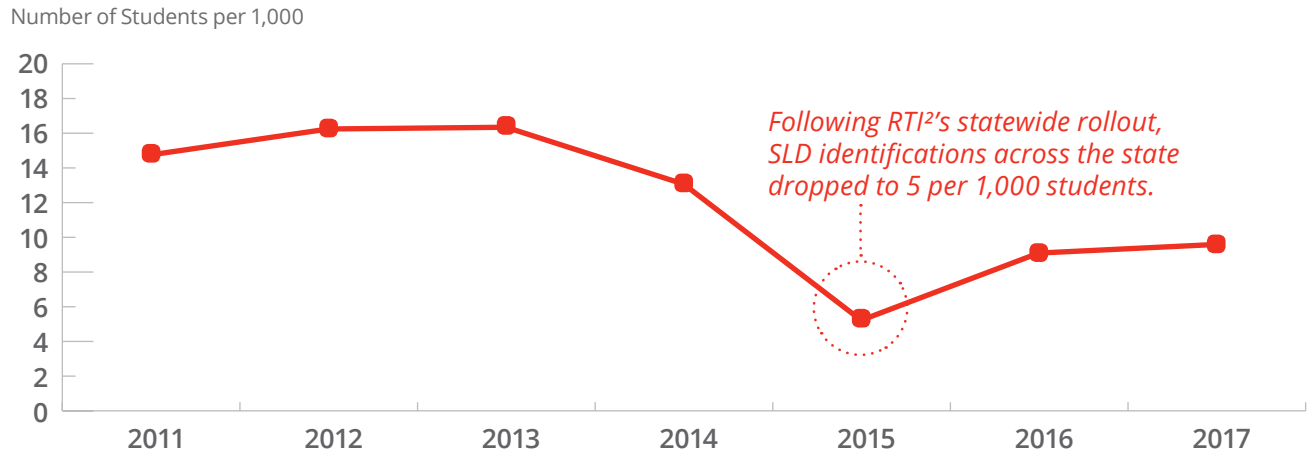


FIGURE 3 Grades K-5 SLD Identification Rates by Gender

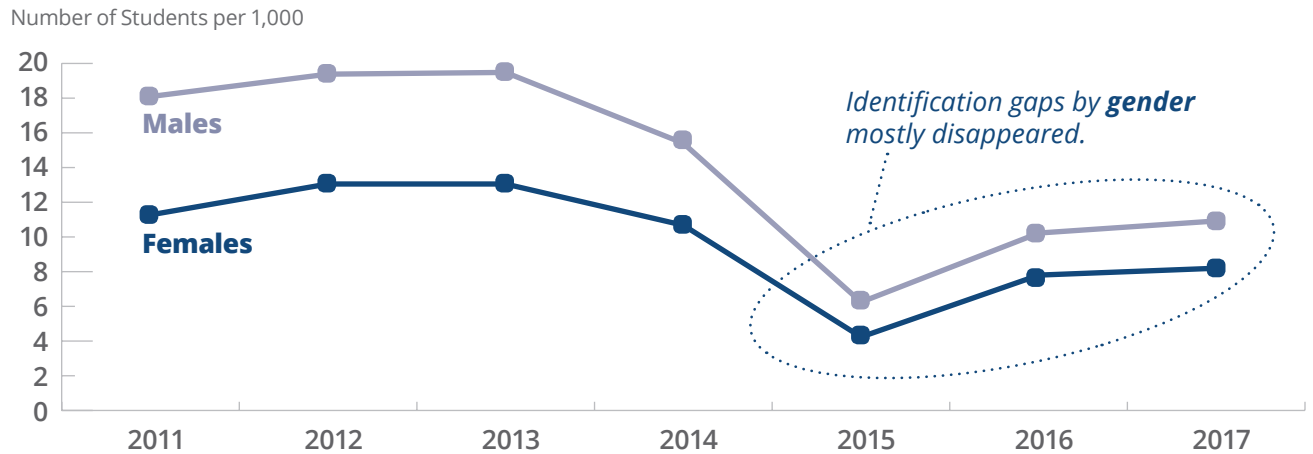
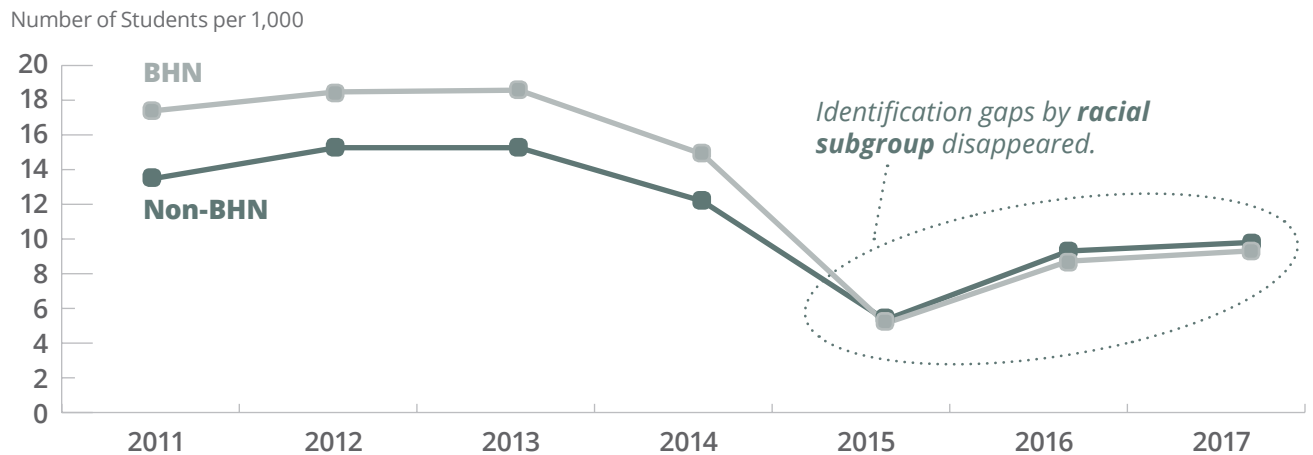


FIGURE 4 Grades K-5 SLD Identification Rates by Racial Subgroup



Since the implementation of RTI², Specific Learning Disabilities identification gaps by racial subgroup have disappeared and male/female gaps have mostly disappeared.

minority and non-minority students have been identified with and SLD at equal rates statewide and male/female rates have moved far closer together (Figures 3 and 4).

There is no evidence that the students who would have previously been identified with an SLD are ending up in other categories of special education. Identification rates for other disabilities that do not use RTI² as the method for identification have all remained stable in the three years both before and after RTI² implementation.²

Furthermore, while SLD identification rates have decreased, the distribution of when they are occurring (mostly in grades 2 and 3) is consistent. These findings suggest that the observed decreases are not due to shifts in the students with disabilities population or to delays in determining student eligibility. Instead, the patterns are those we would expect to see if more students are in fact receiving the support they need through tiered interventions rather than through special education.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

We cannot yet provide a definitive answer as to whether RTI² is achieving the aim of raising the pace of improvement for students who were furthest behind. In the years before implementation, we know that students who had fallen far behind their peers by third grade rarely regained

lost ground. Indeed, less than two percent of third graders who scored “below basic” on state tests reached proficiency by fifth grade. Unfortunately, because the state did not administer assessments in grade 3–8 in 2015–16, we cannot conduct similar analyses until we have additional years of data.

What we have so far are suggestive forms of evidence that point in multiple directions. On the one hand, we hear from the majority of elementary school educators that the process supports greater student learning. Indeed, 75 percent of teachers and 90 percent of administrators in Tennessee’s elementary schools reported this spring that RTI² has the potential to improve their students’ learning. Some districts have reported decreases in the number of students performing below the 25th percentile on universal screener data as well as decreases in students requiring Tier II or III interventions. Moreover, we see that schools where teachers tended to be more supportive of RTI² and who report stronger implementation have fewer students in the lowest performance category.

At the same time, we also see some concerning trends in the data. For example, we have seen evidence in some places that students are staying in tiered interventions for long periods of time and, in others, that those students who exit often require intervention again later in the year. We have also seen universal screener data from some districts suggesting that students in Tier III were making slower progress in foundational areas than their counterparts in Tiers I and II, raising concerns that RTI² is not closing gaps in the ways we would have hoped.

As more data become available, we will continue to track these trends in student achievement and use them to evaluate aspects of the state’s RTI² policies.

Areas of Challenge

THE EVIDENCE TO DATE AROUND PATTERNS of SLD identification suggests that continued implementation of RTI² could pay high dividends for our state in terms of student progress and equity. Yet we also see room for significant improvement in structures and guidance.

Over the last several years, we have heard calls for improvement from educators and districts, many of whom are believers in RTI² as a framework but are concerned about certain aspects of implementation and the ways these challenges might affect students and schools. While 37 percent of all teachers say they strongly believe that RTI² is improving student learning, 29 percent report that RTI² can improve students' learning but that the framework needs significant improvement in their school. The remaining 33 percent are unconvinced that RTI² will improve student learning (Figure 5).

In the next section, we outline four key challenges facing district and schools as they strive to implement RTI². These findings come from a series of observation- and interview-based studies conducted by the department over the past several years, from examinations of RTI² within the group of districts that make up the Tennessee Early Learning Network, and from our analyses of the annual Tennessee Educator Survey.³ Together, they offer a window into specific areas of dissatisfaction with the framework and potential focus points for improvement moving forward.

CHALLENGE

1

INTEGRATING RTI² INTO SCHOOL STRUCTURES

National research has highlighted the challenges that schools across the country face in fitting key RTI² practices into already packed daily schedules. Educators must find time for multiple student intervention periods, regular data team

FIGURE 5 **Teacher and Administrator Perceptions of RTI²**

As of now, I am not convinced that RTI² will improve student learning in my school.



I have seen evidence that RTI² can improve my students' learning, but the program needs significant improvement in my school.



I strongly believe that RTI² has and will continue to improve student learning in my school.



meetings, and educator professional development opportunities. This past year, an article by Vanderbilt researchers Douglas and Lynn Fuchs expressed concern about the level of complexity involved in implementing “an effective three-tier system” and reinforced the extent to which fully implementing the various components of RTI² at both the district and school levels “represent[s] an ambitious undertaking.”⁴

In Tennessee, we see that the time pressures of RTI² have caused real challenges in many schools, and we hear from educators who worry that the massive commitment that their schools are making to RTI² implementation forces them to sacrifice other important priorities.

Many of these concerns are centered on classroom content. Although state guidance specifies that intervention periods should not cut into core instruction, many educators perceive a zero-sum game. For example, one teacher notes: “RTI² has taken a significant amount of our instructional time this school year and that has reduced our class time for math to 60 minutes, ELA to 60 minutes, and science and social studies are only given 30 minutes each day.”

The time pressures of RTI² have caused **real challenges** in many schools, and we hear from educators who worry that the massive commitment to RTI² implementation forces them to **sacrifice other important priorities**.

Other concerns revolve around how time needed to effectively implement RTI² has cut into planning time and even classroom space to accommodate additional intervention tiers. As one teacher said, “The amount of collaborative time required to create, give, and score common formative assessments, as well as plan and put together Tier [II and Tier III] instructional materials has also taken away from planning time that, in the past, would have gone to Tier I instruction.” Another noted: “Our school schedule is so tight; we are filled to capacity; and space is so limited that everything from technology usage to the sharing of space (RTI² teachers all on rolling carts) is a jigsaw puzzle.”

CHALLENGE

2

STAFFING TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to time and space, RTI² implementation also takes human capital—staff to lead the interventions and to carry out the overall oversight and organization. In some cases, schools have restructured budgets to accommodate salaries for interventionists and districts have hired coordinators to oversee the system-wide efforts. Still, staff primarily assigned to other roles have been called upon for support, sometimes at the expense of other equally important efforts.

“Instructional coaches or instructional facilitators have prioritized RTI² services over the past few years,” writes one teacher. “In so doing, intervention services have become the overall school priority, which has in turn ignored addressing instructional challenges, support, and improvement in the classroom.”

We hear from some schools that communication gaps often exist between those staff conducting Tier II and Tier III interventions and Tier I classroom teachers. Indeed, in the Tennessee Early Literacy Network, school teams have worked to develop systems that can help to ensure smooth

“Intervention services have become the overall school priority, which has in turn **ignored addressing instructional challenges**, support, and improvement in the classroom.”

communication across the multiple parties involved in intervention.

While better systems can help, we also see that the districts that appear to have been most successful are those that have allotted staff to ensure consistent communication and supports across school personnel, but we have also heard frustration from many districts that their current funding levels do not allow them to make such staffing possible.

CHALLENGE

3 DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE

Some educators report that they actively seek the department’s guidance on RTI² implementation but that this guidance is often both insufficient in its detail and restrictive in terms of what it requires. Educators also note they are unclear which elements of department guidance are best practice for districts and which are required in order to meet federal and state laws around SLD identification.

Addressing this complicated tension requires straightforward guidance that some educators feel is lacking. For example, educators highlighted how the department’s published resources weren’t meeting the needs of district’s staff. One teacher stated, “The RTI² manual seems to be the ‘how to book’ for our system’s RTI² process, yet the fine print seems to be missing. There seems to be no clear, concise criteria to identifying skill

deficits. This is a major area that needs to be addressed within our system, but can’t be resolved without more knowledge at all levels.” Another teacher was concerned about the guidance around how RTI² should function for different types of students, specifically English learners (ELs): “A system or decision tree for referral of ELs to RTI² could help strengthen this area and get those students the interventions they need to be more successful in reading.”

Similarly, other educators pointed toward a lack of high-quality training. While providing feedback on the Tennessee Educator Survey, one teacher wrote, “RTI² is not executed efficiently. There was no formal teacher training regarding RTI², and many teachers are still unaware of the purpose of this daily time with students.”

While some educators expressed apprehension around the availability and quality of guidance, others focused on the perceived inflexibility and subsequent negative effect of the guidance that currently exists—whether that guidance pertains to intervention group sizes, time allotted for interventions, fidelity checks, or overall implementation. For instance, one school psychologist mentioned how staff at his/her school saw fidelity checks as strict mandates with little value: “Often, if something is missing like a fidelity check, I will have faculty tell me they are willing to backdate it and just do one. Because they still see RTI² as a series of hoops that you’ve got to jump through.”⁵ Others spoke more generally about specific RTI² “rules” that promote compliance rather than a focus on individual student needs.

“They still see RTI² as a **series of hoops** that you’ve got to jump through.”

Another educator summarized: “Because schools are trying to check all the mandated boxes, we aren’t able to do what’s best for our individual buildings. There has to be more flexibility, and what flexibility there is has to be communicated to district leaders so they know what flexibility is there to offer. I’m meeting all the requirements at my building, but I am not doing what’s best for my students.” These competing issues (i.e., insufficient and inflexible guidance) speak to the complexity of RTI² and highlight a multi-layered issue that demands purposeful forethought and planning in order to maximize educator buy-in and support for effective implementation.

CHALLENGE

4

HIGH SCHOOL ROLLOUT

High school implementation of RTI² has been particularly challenging. While around three-quarters of teachers at the elementary level say that they have seen evidence that RTI² can improve student learning, only about half of secondary teachers make this claim and the other half say they are unconvinced that RTI² will improve student learning in their school.

To some extent, this is likely the result of the longer time that elementary schools have had to make sense of the process. But there is also evidence that high schools face a distinct set of challenges around RTI² that are not sufficiently addressed by current state supports. As one school psychologist wrote, “It still feels like we are trying to adapt an elementary-focused model

to high school needs, and it is not working well.” The data requirements and/or intervention class requirements should be able to be modified to fit high school needs.”

On the educator survey, high school teachers most frequently selected RTI² training and enrichment for staff as the greatest need for improving RTI² implementation with progress monitoring as their second area of focus. In the comments, a number of educators noted that appropriate progress monitoring tools and interventions are more difficult to find for the high school level. As one principal noted, “I wholeheartedly believe in the RTI² process. I have seen students and teachers grow, and thoroughly enjoy being a part of this growth. I hope to have more funds or better appropriation of funds for middle and high school intervention classes. It is difficult to find reading intervention programs appropriate for the middle and high school levels, and the ones we have found are very expensive.”

Struggles around scheduling and collaboration are heightened at the high school level where structures tend to be even more complicated. RTI² depends heavily on collaboration of teachers, interventionists, and special educators. This type of collaboration has historically been more challenging in high schools. Scheduling is also more trying because of the variety of courses students are taking to fulfill their individualized programs of study and course requirements.

“It still feels like we are trying to adapt an elementary-focused model to high school needs, and **it is not working well.**”

Recommendations

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? RTI² APPEARS to have significantly improved the process of SLD identification in the state and there are indications that the initiative has strengthened Tennessee schools' ability to support low performing students. Yet we also see considerable variability in implementation with some schools implementing RTI² far more successfully than others. We also hear concerns from educators about the ways that department guidance and support around RTI² have not consistently met their local needs.

From the outset of this work, the department has been committed to listening to educators and other stakeholders, gathering feedback, collecting data, and measuring outcomes to create a continuous improvement process. As a part of this effort, we released two prior reports on RTI². The first—[Implementing RTI²: Reports from the Field](#)—focused on school readiness for initial implementation. The second—[Supporting Early Grades Student Achievement: An Exploration of RTI² Practices](#)—highlighted promising RTI² practices among schools where struggling students were making large gains.

We are now at a stage where we are reassessing state policies in light of what we have learned. The three recommendations below—which include easing the burden of RTI² guidelines, enhancing support and resources for district RTI² implementation, and differentiating RTI² for high schools—represent our commitment to continue adapting our own policies in response to educator feedback.

RECOMMENDATION

1

EASING THE BURDEN OF RTI² GUIDELINES

Educators and administrators across the state

describe the difficulties they have faced in implementing certain process-based requirements of RTI² with fidelity. Specifically, some schools and districts have struggled with the required frequencies of universal screening, progress monitoring, and fidelity monitoring, as well as the time and group-size constraints for intervention periods. While getting these elements of RTI² right is crucial to effective implementation, we believe it is possible to adjust the specific requirements in these areas in ways that will ease the burden on schools without removing key components of the model or compromising program quality.

Over the next several months, department representatives will gather feedback in regional meetings across the state on potential revisions to the RTI² framework that respond to concerns we have heard from educators. Feedback collected at these meetings will serve the dual purpose of reinforcing decisions to move forward with proposed revisions and/or providing a rationale for additional revisions the department hadn't previously considered.

Potential framework revisions would look at making key elements of RTI² more doable for schools and, in turn, improving the occurrence and quality of these practices. For example, current guidance requires three fidelity checks in Tier II and five fidelity checks at Tier III prior to making an instructional decision to intensify intervention. There may be room to adjust the number of fidelity checks while still meeting the purpose of determining whether a student has been provided appropriate instruction in their area of deficit. Potential changes could require fewer fidelity checks overall, fewer direct fidelity checks for intervention providers who score

a Level 5 on TEAM evaluations, or fewer direct fidelity checks for intervention providers who demonstrate strong fidelity in previous direct fidelity checks.

Schools also report challenges with keeping Tier II and III interventions at the recommended group size, and report not having enough staff to provide interventions, especially in the case of grades K–5 Tier III intervention, grades 6–8 Tier II and III intervention, and grades 9–12 Tier II intervention. Providing flexibility in group size within these tiers and grade bands while maintaining focus on several variables that increase intensity of interventions may result in stronger implementation.

Moving forward, it will be critical that potential revisions to the RTI² framework not further complicate implementation of an already complex process. Thoughtfully revising key piece(s) that have been identified as the most difficult barriers to successful implementation may prove beneficial.

RECOMMENDATION

2

ENHANCING SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FOR DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION

As a department, we are committed to improving state resources and materials to provide stronger support for districts' areas of challenge.

We are focused in two areas of need. First, we aim to provide additional funding for district RTI² staffing and, second, we will work to strengthen the tools and trainings that our department provides to build district capacity.

District and school staffing for RTI² has been a continuous challenge, and we have seen over time that the districts that have successfully implemented high quality RTI² across schools have

provided robust support at the district level (see case study on the next page for an example of a district with strong supports). In the Fiscal Year 2019 budget proposal, the department requested funding to provide for an interventionist position in every district within the Basic Education Program (BEP) formula. The current governor's budget includes this request to fund at least one interventionist per district.

Over the last several years, the department has supported program implementation through a structure of regional Professional Learning Communities that were mostly focused on creating the conditions to launch RTI². At this point, districts are no longer primarily working on developing their RTI² framework, but are now actively shifting their focus towards improving the implementation of RTI². We will be reformatting the department's PLC support to provide a more continuous professional learning experience for district and school staff. With support from department CORE interventionists, we hope to better connect the content of PLC's with application of skills in districts and will devote considerable portions of time to discussing potential problems of practice and determining solutions to these challenges.

Another challenge districts face in their work around RTI² is determining how they are progressing with RTI² implementation and the real impact on student outcomes. At this time there are no consistent tools or data being used across the state to determine progress with this initiative. In partnership with the Regional Educational Laboratory–Appalachia, the department will pilot over the next year a series of tools that aim to help districts and schools monitor the strength of their RTI² and identify areas that might still need improvement.

CASE STUDY Robust Support at the District Level

Murfreesboro City Schools has highly prioritized implementation of RTI² in all of its 12 elementary schools. On the Tennessee Educator Survey, four out of five teachers in the district reported that RTI² has improved student learning in their school. This intense collective ownership over RTI² was reinforced by a number of intentional, district-level behaviors. Here are a few guiding principles that emerged in conversations with their district leaders:

- From the start, the district acknowledged that successful RTI² implementation would take time and continuous refinement.
- The district first aligned interventionists' and teachers' instruction by requiring the use of a "very systematic, scripted program" to provide interventions. Then, the district focused on building educators' knowledge base by providing training on reading development, interventions, and research-based best practices.
- While exerting more oversight in its early implementation phase, the district was mindful that requirements and guidelines were created with the input of those who are working most closely with the students.
- The district is up front in its stance that intervention decisions are not always "black and white" and can't be determined by a single screening tool, data source, or individual staff member. Instead, through both providing guidance and attending RTI² data team meetings, the district has helped school teams feel empowered to make their own decisions after reviewing multiple pieces of evidence and thoughtfully considering both academic and non-academic factors.
- The district has not short-changed their investment. They have dedicated RTI² personnel at both the school and district level. All elementary schools have at least one interventionist who provides building-level support for assessing student needs and progress, making data-based instructional decisions, and delivering interventions that target students' specific skill deficits. The interventionists are led by a district-level RTI² Coordinator who remains highly involved in day-to-day school-level RTI² activities.

RECOMMENDATION

3

**DIFFERENTIATING RTI²
FOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

Implementation of RTI² at the high school level has its own unique challenges, and Tennessee high schools have repeatedly highlighted specific needs that don't apply to the earlier grades. The difficulties that high schools are facing in making RTI² work in the secondary context suggests that the department must better differentiate guidance and support at the high school level.

After the first year of full implementation at the high school level, the state is at an opportune moment to take stock of current practices at the high school level in a systematic way. A listening tour will take place this spring specifically targeting high schools across the state with varying levels of belief in RTI². Focus groups will be conducted with high school staff as well as a separate group of students who have participated in Tier II or III interventions. Information gained from the focus groups will determine root causes for the challenges already identified

with high school RTI² implementation. This examination will inform the development of high school specific guidance and resources that will be provided on a regular basis.

This spring, the department will also launch a set of Communities of Practice for high school practitioners. The Communities of Practice will be co-facilitated by current high school practitioners with the department's Director of RTI². It is essential that professional learning for high school RTI² implementation be led by someone currently engaged in this work. The content of the professional learning will be grounded in problems of practice identified at the high school level including topics such as navigating scheduling, how to motivate and engage students in participating in Tier II and III interventions, tying interventions to post-secondary goals, and what successful high school interventions can potentially look like. Results of the listening tour will also inform content for the Communities of Practice.

Conclusion

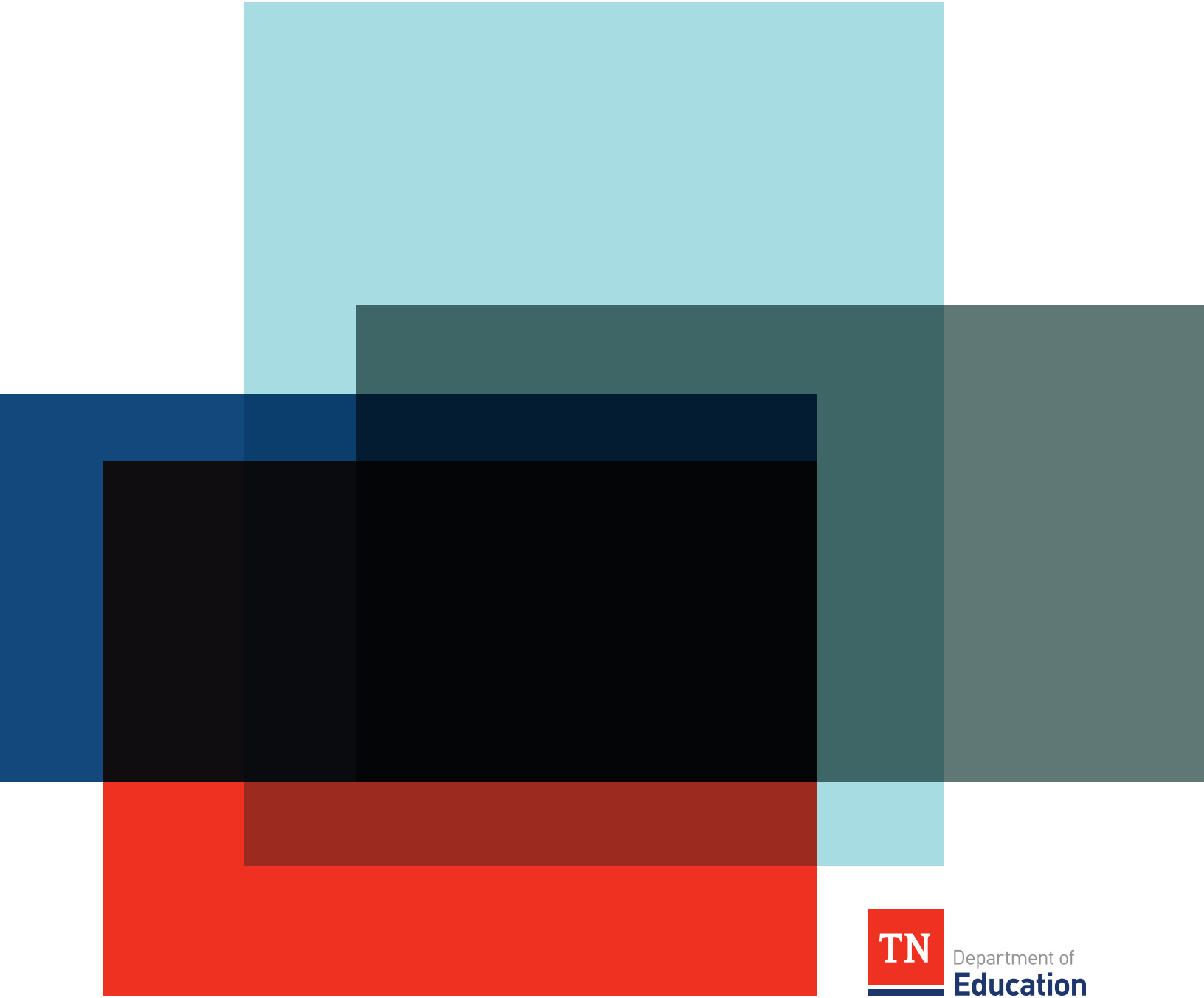
IN RECENT YEARS, TENNESSEE HAS MADE ENORMOUS EDUCATIONAL STRIDES.

We have seen rising scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), increasing graduation rates, and higher postsecondary enrollments. Beneath these gains lies the tremendously difficult work that takes place in schools every day to support students and to integrate new ways of working that have the potential to build on and accelerate our progress. RTI² represents a key element of our state's improvement strategy, but, as with all such strategies, it is not a silver bullet. Over the last several years, our department has learned from the ways that schools and districts have implemented RTI², and we will continue to adapt the framework over time in order to support this work. By working together to ease the burden of RTI² guidelines, enhance support and resources for district implementation, and differentiate RTI² for high schools, we hope to make small changes that can lead to big outcomes for our students.

By working together to **ease the burden** of RTI² guidelines, **enhance support and resources** for district implementation, and **differentiate RTI² for high schools**, we hope to make small changes that can lead to big outcomes for our students.

Notes

1. Congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004 and updated its guidance so that school districts are not required to use a discrepancy model and have the option of using RTI. On January 9, 2013, the department convened an RTI Task Force, which decided a statewide model for RTI was appropriate for Tennessee's students. On January 14, 2013, a proposal for identifying students with an SLD using RTI² was passed by the Students with Disabilities Advisory Council. The Tennessee State Board of Education passed the proposal and finalized RTI² as the method for determining students' eligibility for an SLD in July 2014.
2. Other disability codes include: Intellectual Disability, Autism, Emotional Disturbance, Speech/Language, and Other Health Impairment
3. The department's annual Tennessee Educator Survey, administered in partnership with the Tennessee Education Research Alliance, includes an open response box at the end of the survey that allows educators to highlight anything they'd like to communicate to the department. This year, we received around 10,000 responses. Over 1,200 of these responses referenced RTI².
4. Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. (2017). Critique of the national evaluation of response to intervention: A case for simpler frameworks. *Exceptional Children*, 83(3), 255-268.
5. Ebbinger, A. M. (2017). Elementary school psychologists' perceptions of response to intervention and its use to diagnose students with specific learning disabilities in Tennessee: A mixed methods study (Order No. 10605271). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1964388366).



MINUTES

Board of Education Regular Meeting

January 23, 2018 6:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

In attendance: Chair Butch Campbell, Vice Chair Nancy Rainier, Jared Barrett, Wes Ballard, Phil King, David Settles and Collier Smith.

Staff: Dr. Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Ralph Ringstaff, Joe Marlin, Lisa Trail, Greg Lyles, Jenny Ortiz, Shavon Davis-Louis, Robin Newell, Maria Johnson, Quinena Bell, Emily Spencer, Kristina Maddux, and Angela Fairchild.

Assistant City Attorney Kelley Baker and City Liaison Bill Shacklett

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR Chair Butch Campbell

Procedural Item

1. Pledge of Allegiance Chair Butch Campbell

Procedural Item

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ahmad Johnson, a sixth grader from Bradley Academy and Jade Watson, a third grader from Cason Lane Academy.

2. Moment of Silence Chair Butch Campbell

Procedural Item

Mr. Campbell asked that we all remember the family of Ms. Mary Huper, a cafeteria worker at Discovery School, who passed away last night and the students and families in Kentucky where the recent school shooting occurred.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA Chair Butch Campbell

Action Item

Wesley Ballard made the motion to approve the agenda. Nancy Rainier seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.

III. COMMUNICATIONS Mrs. Lisa Trail

Information Item

Mr. Ralph Ringstaff introduced the coaches of the winning basketball teams in tournaments this year. Scales' Coach Alexander came forward and introduced his girls' team and Coach Gibson, his assistant coach. He said that the team went through the season undefeated and won the tournament. He thanked the Board for allowing them to have the basketball season. He added that it is a positive thing for the team and the community. Bradley's coach, Coach Mitchell, introduced his boys' winning team. He said that they

went through the season undefeated as well and won the tournament. Coach Mitchell echoed what Coach Alexander said to the Board thanking them for their support. Mr. Ringstaff and the Board congratulated both teams for a job well done.

Collier Smith thanked Mr. Ringstaff for the great job that he has done with the basketball league in our system. Mr. Ringstaff also thanked the Murfreesboro Police Department for their support at the games.

Lisa Trail introduced Coach Turnbow with MTSU and thanked him for allowing us to take our students to MTSU for the educational game day.

Murfreesboro City Schools would like to thank the following individuals and community partners for their generosity during our 2017 Season of Sharing: This year we were able to assist approximately 1,200 children & families with their holiday needs.

General Mills

Parks Realty

North Boulevard Church of Christ (Youth Group, Band Of Brothers)

Murfreesboro City Schools (Instruction Dept., Food Service Association)

Bethel United Methodist Church Toy Store

Murfreesboro Police Dept. (Shop With A Cop)

Amy Reason

Also a special thanks to our Maintenance Dept. for transporting gifts and Hobgood School for the use of their gym for distribution.

Congratulations to Dr. Stacey Burt who will be working with Netflix and Scholastic to create 13 episodes of *Magic School Bus*.

Congratulations to Scales Elementary School. The Tennessee Behavior Support Project from Vanderbilt has asked Scales to submit a video, created by Ryan Stewart and the RTI2B team at Scales, to the Association of Positive Behavior Support Film Festival that will be held March 28-31 in San Diego.

Mitchell Neilson will be offering College Bound Family Night this Thursday, January 25 at 6:00 p.m. It is open to any MCS parent or sibling who is interested in earning their GED or going back to college.

The African American Cultural Celebration is this Thursday night at Patterson Park from 4 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

**1. School Board Appreciation Week
Information Item**

Dr. Linda Gilbert

Mr. Bill Shacklett came forward and said that this group is always thanking teachers and others for the job they do and he wanted to thank them for the job that they do for the students of our community. He said that it is so impressive to see this group work together. They are so conscientious of the job they do. They work extremely hard. He read a proclamation from the mayor and city council to the School Board. Mr. Campbell came forward and accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Board. He thanked Mr. Shacklett, the mayor, and the city council and everyone that attended tonight. He appreciated the comments and the leadership that he gives the Board along with the staff of Murfreesboro City Schools. The crowd gave the Board a round of applause.

Mr. Campbell thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight. He said that he felt that athletics plays a major part in the life of these students. He said that he feels that the students learn life skills and other skills while participating in athletics.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Butch Campbell

Action Item

**1. Approval of School Fees
Action Item**

Chair Butch Campbell

Mr. Campbell asked about the competition that the cheerleaders are attending. Dr. Gilbert said that they didn't get to go to that competition at Centennial, but they will be going to the National Competition. She introduced Amber Kelly, who is one of the cheerleading coaches and was in the audience. Collier Smith added that they are very good.

Nancy Rainier asked about the \$21.00 fee for one of the field trips. Mrs. Smith explained that that trip was to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Studio B and because this school only has one 6th grade, they had to pay for the bus. That was the reason for the fee.

**2. Minutes 1-09-18 Board Meeting
Action Item**

Chair Butch Campbell

**3. Second Reading-Board Policy 1.1061 School Board Accountability
Action Item**

Chair Butch Campbell

4. Second Reading-Board Policy 3.201 Safety

Chair Butch Campbell

Action Item Mr. Campbell also asked about Board Policy 3.201. He wanted “principal or designee” added to line 19. Dr. Gilbert said that she would get that added.	
5. Second Reading-Board Policy 3.202 Emergency Preparedness Plan Action Item Mr. Campbell also asked about Board Policy 3.202. He wanted to know if we have a company that comes in and checks fire extinguishers on a regular basis. Mr. Anderson said yes, they come every month.	Chair Butch Campbell
6. Second Reading-Board Policy 3.208 Facilities Planning Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
7. Second Reading-Board Policy 3.210 Naming a School Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
8. Second Reading-Board Policy 3.215 Inspection and Acceptance of New Facilities Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
9. Second Reading-Board Policy 6.202 Home schools Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell
10. Second Reading-Board Policy 6.209 Child Custody Action Item David Settles made the motion to approve the consent items. Jared Barrett seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.	Chair Butch Campbell

V. ACTION ITEMS Chair Butch Campbell
Action Item

1. Approval of Tenured Teachers Action Item Mr. Ringstaff came forward and explained the tenure law and the changes that were made in 2011. He said that a teacher must work in the system for at least 5 years before they were eligible for tenure. The last two years of that 5 year period, they had to receive a 4 or 5, which was above expectations or significantly above expectations. If they received anything less than that, they had to start all over. He said that it is more difficult to get tenure now. We have 47 teachers and 3 principals that have met these requirements, which Mr. Ringstaff added was a job well done. He introduced each teacher. Nancy Rainier made the motion to grant tenure to each of these teachers. Phil King seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.	Chair Butch Campbell
2. Approval of 2018-2019 School Calendar Action Item	Chair Butch Campbell

Dr. Gilbert told the Board that they had the 2018-2019 academic calendar before them and explained the changes. She said that there are no more half days. Dr. Gilbert said that there are 3 days that we are taking out of the snow stockpile days and putting them in the calendar. We have 180 student days minus the 3 days for snow days. We have 5 administrative days, 5 in-service days and two in-service days that teachers earn on their own. She also said that we are ending winter break with a full day. She felt that the half days tend to be wasted.

Collier Smith asked why we have to start so soon. Dr. Gilbert said that we have 180 days to get in before Memorial Day. Mrs. Smith then asked that since you can go vote wherever you want to, would election day come into play for any of the work days or having the parent teacher conferences on the election day. Dr. Gilbert said that since Rutherford County is out, it was a security concern for us to be out. She added that it's almost impossible to have school on that day. There was discussion regarding which schools are voting sites and which are not. Mrs. Smith asked if we could have parent teacher conferences on that day and Dr. Gilbert explained that the timing would not be right. She just felt that it would be difficult on election day. Mrs. Smith said that is something to consider. Mrs. Smith also felt that making the half days into full days was the right thing to do and she asked if Dr. Gilbert spoke with Rutherford County about considering the same. Dr. Gilbert said that she did not share with Mr. Odom what her plans were with removing the half days, but Rutherford County already had their calendar in place for next year. Mrs. Smith said that it would be nice for that to be consistent between systems. There was more discussion regarding that. She said that she can share with Mr. Odom what we are doing. Mrs. Smith added that Christmas break is fantastic! Dr. Gilbert did explain that this calendar was brought before all principals, the Central Office staff, MEA E-Board and several teachers before presenting it to the Board tonight and lots of thought was put into it. Dr. Gilbert added that one way that our district will be graded will be attendance, so that was also taken into consideration.

There was much more discussion regarding the calendar and snow days. Ms. Rainier also commended Dr. Gilbert on making the call early enough for parents to make preparation for snow days. Mr. Ballard felt that there was not a month where we fulfilled every calendar day during that month and he had a concern about the lack of classroom time, although he feels that it must work because he has not heard from parents with complaints. He was also concerned about starting school in August and taking Good Friday and then spring break. For the Board and the audience, Dr. Gilbert gave a detailed, day by day explanation of the calendar and her reasoning behind each decision that was made. Most days off are holidays. Ms. Rainier stated that she felt that Dr.

Gilbert had done a very good job creating the calendar. Mr. Settles added that if we can get things done in 180 days, he didn't see a need to add more days to the calendar. He felt that it was a good calendar.

Collier Smith said that she still had a problem with students being off on a Thursday and then on Tuesday again. She asked if there is a way to change that. That is around the election day. Mr. Campbell said that we have teachers that live in other counties that have to vote and Dr. Gilbert added that since several of our schools are voting stations, she would be concerned about safety during that day. Mrs. Smith suggested that we not have school, but possibly have PT conferences that day.

Jared Barrett made the motion to approve the 2018-2019 school calendar. David Settles seconded the motion.

Mr. Campbell asked for a roll call vote.

Wesley Ballard	Yes	Jared Barrett	Yes
Butch Campbell	Yes	Phil King	Yes
Nancy Rainier	Yes	David Settles	Yes
Collier Smith	No		

The calendar passed with a vote of 6 ayes and 1 no.

Mr. Campbell recommended that when things like this come up and Board members get questions with concerns from the public, please have them contact other Board members so that each Board member is aware of the concerns.

VI. REPORTS AND INFORMATION	Dr. Linda Gilbert
Information Item	
1. Legislative Update	Mr. Jared Barrett
Information Item	

Mr. Barrett gave an update since the resolution on vouchers was passed by the Board. He said that item had been taken off notice and will not come up this year. He also told about the bill for funding of school nurses was moving forward. This bill would change the ratio of school nurses from 3000 to 1 to 750 to 1. He added that there is also a bill for funding of (3) RTI2 positions. He said that currently we fund those positions. Lastly, there is a bill that would give LEA's 15 days for data verification on testing. Mr. Barrett said that at the next Board meeting, he'd like to have a resolution to support funding for school nurses.

Mr. Barrett also mentioned that the Day on the Hill is coming up February 12-13. He encouraged the Board to register for that.

Nancy Rainier also mentioned that tonight at 7 at Belmont University, the gubernatorial candidates are speaking. Dr. Gilbert mentioned that Dr. Tammy Garrett and Sheri Arnette are attending that.

Mr. Campbell thanked Mr. Barrett for the wonderful job that he had done keeping everyone updated.

2. Personnel Report	Dr. Linda Gilbert
<p>Information Item</p> <p>Dr. Gilbert told the Board that if they had questions, please see Mr. Ringstaff.</p> <p>Mrs. Smith said that we have had a number of licensed teachers hired. Mr. Ringstaff said that we had a few teachers leave at winter break and they had to be replaced. Dr. Gilbert clarified that some of those were interims because of teachers taking maternity leaves.</p>	

3. Revenue and Expenditure Report	Mr. Gary Anderson
<p>Information Item</p> <p>Mr. Anderson explained that we are at the 50% time of year on this report. He also explained the net income, revenue, and expenditure portions of the report. He says that we should be a recipient of growth money this year.</p>	

VII. OTHER BUSINESS	Chair Butch Campbell
<p>Information Item</p> <p>The Excellence in Education Gala will be held at MTSU at the new Student Union Building this Friday night. Drs. Max and Mary Morris and Reeves Rogers will be honored.</p> <p>Phil King mentioned that he had heard a mass transit talk about traffic going to Nashville from Rutherford County and how they are expecting the population for Rutherford County to double by 2040. Dr. Gilbert mentioned that she will be meeting with Mr. Jim Crumley next Monday to discuss the need for land to build a bus garage and school.</p>	

VIII. ADJOURNMENT	Chair Butch Campbell
<p>Action Item</p>	

Jared Barrett made the motion to adjourn. David Settles seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Director of Schools

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in October	Descriptor Term: <h2 style="text-align: center;">Business Management Goals</h2>	Descriptor Code: <h3 style="text-align: center;">3.100</h3>	Issued Date:
		Rescinds:	Issued:

- 1 The Board establishes these general goals for the conduct of its management program:
- 2 1. To develop a plan for the management of buildings and grounds which provides a safe, secure,
3 comfortable, and clean environment for instruction and administration;
 - 4 2. To provide a building maintenance program which protects the taxpayer’s investment in facilities
5 and ensures their continued use;
 - 6 3. To provide sufficient supplies and equipment for effective teaching and learning;
 - 7 4. To provide a student transportation system which meets state requirements;
 - 8 5. To design and implement a program of food services which emphasizes nutritional needs of
9 children as the basis of growth and development of bodies and minds;
 - 10 6. To collect and maintain data pertinent to educational planning; and
 - 11 7. To provide a sound program of insurance protection for system employees, students, and
12 property.

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in October	Descriptor Term: Building and Grounds Management	Descriptor Code: 3.200	Issued Date:
		Rescinds: SS 6	Issued: 09/01/12

1 All school properties shall be maintained in good physical condition: safe, clean, sanitary, and as
2 comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or the use requires.

3 School administrators, teachers, or volunteers shall not alter or change any part of the school building
4 structure or premises. If changes or repairs are necessary, the matter shall be reported to the
5 Maintenance Department.

6 The Director of Schools shall develop and implement a program of maintenance of all district-owned
7 buildings and grounds. The program shall provide for the following:

- 8 1. Adequate custodial programs for all schools;
- 9 2. Improvement and maintenance of school buildings and grounds;
- 10 3. Repairs, including repairs of equipment, and painting; and
- 11 4. Determination of obsolete/surplus equipment.

12 The following are responsibilities of building principals:

- 13 1. Overseeing the operation of the school and requiring that the personnel assigned to the building
14 keep it in a clean, healthy, and pleasant condition;
- 15 2. Inspecting the premises of the school to prevent, identify, or remedy hazardous conditions
- 16 3. Requesting, in a timely manner, appropriate maintenance and repairs through the appropriate
17 channels.

18

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in October	Descriptor Term: Equipment and Supplies Management	Descriptor Code: 3.300	Issued Date:
		Rescinds:	Issued:

- 1 The Director of Schools shall develop procedures promoting the useful life of equipment and supplies.
- 2 Equipment management shall be in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines.
- 3 Employees of the system are responsible for the materials, equipment and supplies assigned to them. In
- 4 addition, employees are responsible for the reasonable preservation and protection of materials,
- 5 equipment. and supplies not under their direct control when such are endangered and when the system
- 6 employee having direct control is not present or is otherwise unable to act.
- 7

Cross References

Inventories 2.702

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Student Goals	Descriptor Code: 6.100	Issued Date:
		Rescinds:	Issued:

1 To create a culture of collaborative learning focusing on the whole child assuring success in the global
 2 community, the Board establishes the following goals:

- 3 1. To assure all students the same educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed,
 4 religion, ethnic origin, sex or disabilities. ¹
- 5 2. To protect and observe the legal rights of students;
- 6 3. To educate students with respect and encouragement;
- 7 4. To provide an environment where students can learn personal and civic responsibility for their
 8 actions through meaningful experiences;
- 9 5. To discipline students in a fair and constructive manner;
- 10 6. To provide for the safety, health and welfare of students; and
- 11 7. To promote faithful attendance and diligent effort.
- 12

Legal References

- 1. 20 USCS § 1703; TCA 49-6-3109

Cross References

Discrimination/Harassment 6.304

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Bus Safety and Conduct	Descriptor Code: 6.308	Issued Date:
		Rescinds: SS 8	Issued: 09/01/12

1 In order to maintain conditions and atmosphere suitable for safety and learning, no person shall enter
2 onto a school bus except students assigned to that bus or other persons with lawful and valid business on
3 the bus.¹

4 The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students shall conduct themselves on the bus
5 in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior.

6 Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver, bus assistant, and teacher while on the
7 bus, and all reasonable directions given by bus driver, bus assistant, and teacher shall be followed.

8 The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline
9 problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. A student may be denied the privilege of riding
10 the bus if the principal determines that the student's behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus,
11 or if he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation.

12 The suspension of a student from riding the bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school
13 suspension.

14 Any student requesting to exit the bus at any point between school and the normal drop-off point must
15 have written parental permission and the approval of the principal or principal designee. The principal
16 or principal designee will provide written approval to the bus driver before the student is allowed to
17 proceed.

18 Any student wishing to ride a bus other than the student's designated bus must have written parental
19 permission and the approval of the principal or the principal designee. The principal or principal
20 designee will provide written approval to the bus driver before the student is allowed to proceed.

21 Students who transfer from bus to bus while en route to and from school shall be expected to abide by
22 the discipline policies adopted by the Board and rules adopted by the staff of the assigned school.

23 The Director of Schools shall develop the district's "Rules for Bus Conduct" and have them placed in
24 the student handbook and/or distributed to all students.

25 **USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS**

26 Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on school vehicles transporting students to and
27 from school or extracurricular activities.

28 Video surveillance shall be used to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff and property.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2008
2. TCA 49-6-2118

Cross References

Discipline Procedures 6.313
Suspension/Expulsion/Remand 6.316
Student Records 6.600-604

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: <h2 style="text-align: center;">Dress Code</h2>	Descriptor Code: <h3 style="text-align: center;">6.310</h3>	Issued Date:
		Rescinds: <h3 style="text-align: center;">STU 26</h3>	Issued: <h3 style="text-align: center;">01/01/01</h3>

- 1 Students shall dress and groom in a clean, neat and modest manner so as not to distract or interfere
- 2 with the operation of the school.

- 3 More specific guidelines appropriate for each school shall be developed by the principal, subject to
- 4 approval by the Director of Schools.

- 5 When a student is dressed in a manner which is likely to cause disruption or interference with the
- 6 operation of the school, or in a manner that violates the developed guidelines, the principal or designee
- 7 shall take appropriate action, which may include discipline.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4215(a)(1) ; TCA 49-1-302(j)

Cross References

- Discipline Procedures 6.313
 Suspension/Expulsion/Remand 6.316

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April	Descriptor Term: Corporal Punishment	Descriptor Code: 6.314	Issued Date:
		Rescinds: STU 27	Issued: 06/01/12

- 1 Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure in any school.

Cross References

Discipline Procedures 6.313

Murfreesboro City School Board

Monitoring: Review: Annually, in May	Descriptor Term: Migrant Students	Descriptor Code: 6.504	Issued Date:
		Rescinds: STU 51	Issued: 10/01/02

1 The administration of Murfreesboro City Schools will identify migratory students in the district, as
2 required by law, and develop written administrative procedures for ensuring that migrant students receive
3 services for which they are eligible. In developing and implementing a program to address the needs of
4 migratory students the district will:¹

- 5 1. Identify migratory students and assess the educational and related health and social needs of each
6 student.
- 7 2. Provide a full range of services to migrant students including applicable Title I programs, special
8 education, gifted education, EL programs, counseling programs, and other programs available to all
9 students in the district.
- 10 3. Provide migratory children with the opportunity to meet the same statewide assessment standards
11 that all students are expected to meet.
- 12 4. To the extent feasible, provide advocacy and outreach programs to migratory students and their
13 families and professional development for district staff.
- 14 5. Provide parents an opportunity for meaningful participation in the program.

15 If a migrant student is identified by the district, the director of schools or designee shall notify the
16 Tennessee Department of Education and request assistance if needed.

Legal References

1. 20 USCS §§ 6318, 6391, 6399

RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
IN SUPPORT OF LOWERING THE NURSE-PUPIL RATIO**

WHEREAS, the Murfreesboro City Board of Education provides a local system of public education; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Tennessee requires that the Tennessee General Assembly “provide for the maintenance, support and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools”; and

WHEREAS, in the school setting, the school nurse is the caretaker who provides the immediate health needs of children; and

WHEREAS, the current nurse-pupil ratio is one nurse for every 3,000 students; yet the nurse may be the only qualified person to administer specialized health services to children, in each school and on field trips, who need those services; and

WHEREAS, a child’s health impacts the ability of the student to access instruction and succeed academically and personally; and

WHEREAS, lowering the nurse-pupil ratio will provide students with the support they need and reinforce the strides in academic achievement that have been made over the past several years; and

WHEREAS, both the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS) and Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA) have taken positions supporting funding for additional nurses;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION urges the General Assembly to lower the Basic Education Program (BEP) nurse-pupil ratio to one nurse for every 750 students, as stated in HB503/SB534, to help meet the needs of students across Tennessee.

Adopted by unanimous vote on the thirteenth of February, 2018.

Butch Campbell, Chair

Phil King

Nancy Rainier, Vice Chair

David Settles

Wesley Ballard

Collier Smith

Jared Barrett

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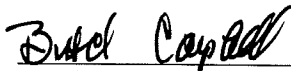
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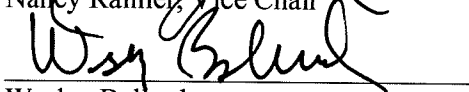
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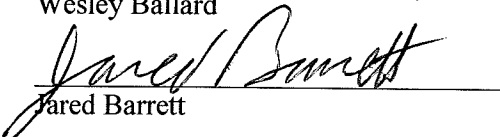
Butch Campbell, Chair



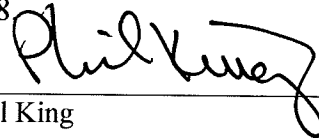
Nancy Rainier, Vice Chair



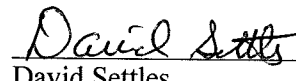
Wesley Ballard



Jared Barrett



Phil King



David Settles



Collier Smith

RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND INSTRUCTION
(RTI²) POSITIONS**

WHEREAS, the Murfreesboro City Board of Education provides a local system of public education; and

WHEREAS, Murfreesboro City Schools has a profound commitment to focus on the whole child, including each child’s academic development—regardless of the child’s learning capacity, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education and all personnel associated with Murfreesboro City Schools do their utmost to ensure students are provided with adequate personnel and material resources; and

WHEREAS, RTI² allows districts to identify students who struggle with specific learning deficits and support those students with appropriate intervention and support

WHEREAS, school districts in Tennessee must implement the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) framework, yet there is no funding from the State of Tennessee for that implementation; and

WHEREAS, RTI² has been hindered by the inability for districts to fully devote personnel to supporting those students who need intervention because funds are not available to hire additional teachers and instructional assistants to meet these critical needs; and

WHEREAS, providing students with direct support would impact student achievement throughout the state and reinforce the growth in educational achievement that has been made over the last several years; and

WHEREAS, both the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS) and Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA) have taken positions supporting funding for school district RTI² positions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION urges the General Assembly to amend the Basic Education Program (BEP) formula to include funding for Response to Instruction and Intervention positions each school, as stated in HB501/SB481, to help meet the needs of students across Tennessee.

Adopted by unanimous vote on the thirteenth of February, 2018.

Butch Campbell, Chair

Phil King

Nancy Rainier, Vice Chair

David Settles

Wesley Ballard

Collier Smith

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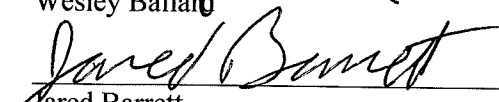
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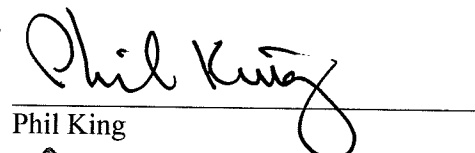
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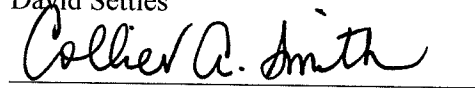

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PTR 180130 End of Fifth Period

SCHOOL	Pre - K			Kindergarten			1st Grade			2nd Grade			3rd Grade			Total	Total	K-3 PTR	4th Grade			5th Grade			6th Grade			Total	Total	4-6 PTR	Total Students																	
	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	Pupils	Teachers	Ratio	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	P	#	PTR	Pupils	Teachers	Ratio	Total w/o Pre-K	Building Total																
DISCOVERY				59	3	19.67	60	3	20.00	60	3	20.00	60	3	20.00	239	12	19.92		66	3	22.00	60	3	20.00	22	1	22.00	148	7	21.14	387	387															
BLACK FOX	10	40	2	20	105	6	17.50	102	6	17.00	115	6	19.17	117	6	19.50	439	24	18.29	113	6	18.83	128	6	21.33	97	4	24.25	338	16	21.13	777	873															
	24	2	12																									22	2	11.00	22	878																
	CDC																																															
BRADLEY				50	3	16.67	56	3	18.67	67	4	16.75	62	3	20.67	235	13	18.08		55	3	18.33	63	4	15.75	48	3	16.00	166	10	16.60	401	401															
CASON LANE	10	40	2	20	116	7	16.57	104	5	20.80	112	6	18.67	136	7	19.43	468	25	18.72	133	6	22.17	119	6	19.83	61	3	20.33	313	15	20.87	781	867															
	15	2	7.5																									21	3	7.00	27	853																
	CDC																																															
ERMA SIEGEL	11	40	2	20	100	5	20.00	109	5	21.80	115	6	19.17	120	6	20.00	444	22	20.18	127	6	21.17	142	6	23.67	24	1	24.00	293	13	22.54	737	810															
	25	2	12.5													5	1	5.00										32	4	8.00	37	759																
	Deaf and Vision Ed CDC																																															
HOBGOOD				58	3	19.33	104	6	17.33	96	5	19.20	83	4	20.75	98	5	19.60	381	20	19.05	111	5	22.20	86	4	21.50	74	3	24.67	271	12	22.58	652	710													
																																			690													
MITCHELL-NEILSON	39	2	19.5	117	6	19.50	110	5	22.00	96	6	16.00	83	4	20.75	406	21	19.33	96	5	19.20	115	5	23.00	74	4	18.50	285	14	20.36	691	748																
	15															14	1	14.00										4	1	4.00	18	782																
	Best																																															
NORTHFIELD	40	2	20	88	5	17.60	76	4	19.00	80	4	20.00	89	4	22.25	333	17	19.59	95	5	19.00	78	4	19.50	38	2	19.00	211	11	19.18	544	670																
	28	3	9.333																									43	5	8.60	43	652																
	CDC																																															
OVERALL				153	8	19.13	147	7	21.00	170	9	18.89	176	9	19.56	646	33	19.58	163	7	23.29	152	7	21.71	62	3	20.67	377	17	22.18	1023	1023																
																																			935													
REEVES-ROGERS				53	3	17.67	79	4	19.75	59	3	19.67	55	3	18.33	246	13	18.92		73	4	18.25	70	4	17.50	24	1	24.00	167	9	18.56	413	437															
																												24	2	12.00	24	452																
	CDC																																															
PITTARD				120	6	20.00	97	5	19.40	112	6	18.67	108	6	18.00	437	23	19.00		130	6	21.67	131	6	21.83	90	5	18.00	351	17	20.65	788	788															
	10																																		755													
SCALES				161	8	20.13	155	8	19.38	143	8	17.88	149	7	21.29	608	31	19.61		147	7	21.00	137	6	22.83	85	4	21.25	369	17	21.71	977	1029															
	23	2	11.5																									19	3	6.33	19	980																
OFF SITE PRE-K	CDC																																															
Oakland Court	40	2	20	1226	66	18.58	1191	60	19.85	1212	65	18.65	1253	63	19.89	Individual Grade Level Students/Teachers/PTR						1309	63	20.78	1281	61	21.00	699	34	20.56	REGULAR ED SUB TOTAL		8171															
Mercury Court	39	2	19.5																												SPED K-6 CDC, BEST, Vision		190															
TOTAL OFF SITE	79	4	19.75																												SPECIAL ED PRE-K		115															
PRE-K SUBTOTALS	CDC																																															
Pre-K Peer Models	56			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE 94% </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> REGULAR EDUCATION PTR <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th>Students</th> <th>Teachers</th> <th>PTR</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Kindergarten thru Third Grade</td> <td>4882</td> <td>254</td> <td>19.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fourth Grade thru Sixth Grade</td> <td>3289</td> <td>158</td> <td>20.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>District Totals</td> <td>8171</td> <td>412</td> <td>19.83</td> </tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> GROWTH OVER LAST YEAR End of 2016-2017 → 8597 Growth from 16-17 to 17-18 → 231 </div> </div>																														Students	Teachers	PTR	Kindergarten thru Third Grade	4882	254	19.22	Fourth Grade thru Sixth Grade	3289	158	20.82	District Totals	8171	412	19.83
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Pre-K Regular Ed	296	15	19.7	TOTAL BEP FUNDED		8361																																										
Pre-K Special Ed	115	11	10.5	TOTAL ALL OTHER PRE-K		352																																										
PRE-K TOTALS	467	26	18	DISTRICT TOTAL STUDENTS		8828																																										