




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
12234

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
STATEWIDE COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION
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March 2009

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Presidents of Boards of Education
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools
Executive Directors of Approved Private Schools
New York City Department of Education
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education
Commissioner's Advisory Panel for Special Education Services
SETRC Professional Development Specialists
Regional School Support Centers
Impartial Hearing Officers
Mediators
Other State Agencies

FROM: James P. DeLorenzo 

SUBJECT: Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center (RtI-TAC)

The New York State Education Department, Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) announces the award of a five-year contract to establish the New York State (NYS) Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center (RtI-TAC) to the State University College at Buffalo.

The RtI -TAC is part of the Department's strategy to promote and build school district capacity to implement a systemic, response to intervention process. RtI is a nationally recognized instructional process that begins with appropriate core instruction; early screening and identification of students who are struggling in academic and behavioral areas; and, continuous monitoring on how well these students respond to changes in targeted instruction to address their learning needs. To ensure that underachievement in a student suspected of having a learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading, effective July 1, 2012, all school districts in NYS must have an RtI process in place as part of its process to determine if a student in grades K-4 is a student with a learning disability in the area of reading. For further information, see the memo *Implementation of Response to Intervention Programs* at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/RTI.htm>.

Many of the activities and services of the RtI-TAC will be available to assist all school districts in NYS as they develop their capacity to implement an RtI program. The activities of the RtI-TAC include:



- Compiling/disseminating relevant and useful information, resources and tools relative to RtI.
- Conducting professional development sessions relating to RtI through regional trainings, webinars and other forms of communication to school districts, parents and State funded technical assistance providers (Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Centers) including, but not limited to the following topics:
 - scientific, research-based (or evidence-based) literacy instruction and intervention;
 - progress monitoring of individual students; and
 - use of school data to review and revise instructional programs and interventions.
- Developing a web-based resource on a newly created website which contains:
 - links to research;
 - TAC developed streaming or other forms of video on RtI and data-based decision-making;
 - TAC developed PowerPoint presentations related to RtI implementation;
 - discussion forums; and
 - other relevant information.
- Coordinating with the federally-funded National RtI Center to promote high quality technical assistance in NYS.

In addition to the above, the following activities and services of the RtI-TAC will be available to those school districts identified by VESID through a competitive grant process that are developing and implementing RtI programs:

- Creating, piloting, and refining professional development modules related to implementation of an RtI process in participating schools.
- Providing technical assistance and embedded professional development for implementation of RtI programs.
- Conducting formative and summative assessment of progress of RtI implementation.

In the spring of 2009, VESID will be soliciting applications from school districts in NYS to initiate an RtI process in one or more of its school buildings. Selected applicants must agree to implementation of an RtI process consistent with NYS regulations and current research. Information on the pilot grant project will be posted on the VESID website when the grant materials are available.

Further information on RtI and the RtI-TAC will be posted on the VESID and EMSC websites. For more information on the project, contact VESID at (518) 486-7462 or mgiugno@mail.nysed.gov. To ensure dissemination to appropriate individuals within a school district, I ask Superintendents to please share this memorandum with individuals such as Building Principals, Directors of Special Education, School Psychologists, Guidance Counselors, Directors of Pupil Personnel and Parent Teacher Associations.

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