

**Rtl Mythbuster**  
**Rtl/ESEA/Assessment Task Force**  
**Submitted by Kathy Champeau and Deb Zarling**

**What is the difference between Rtl and SLD rule? Who does the WI SLD rule apply to?**

**Answer:**

Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a multi-level system of support intended to provide all students with the necessary levels of instructional support to be successful. In contrast, the SLD rule outlines the legal requirements necessary to identify a student with a specific learning disability. This is a significant distinction. The sunset of the IQ achievement discrepancy as a way to identify children with SLD as of December, 2013 means that a new process for that identification needs to be currently in place in Wisconsin schools for those few students. This does not mean that a multi-level system of support for all students needs to be in place. Changing an entire school structure is not mandatory under the current federal law and state rule. To have a Response to Intervention multi-level system of support for all students is a local control decision.

To further clarify, the SLD rule is intended to be used after appropriate instruction, which includes multiple layers of classroom and other high quality instructional support, has not been successful in meeting the individual student's needs and it appears that the student will need substantial ongoing, long term support to be successful. This could occur with or without a Rtl framework in place. If approached as a system of support, a Rtl framework is likely to substantially reduce the number of students who will need intensive interventions (International Reading Association, 2009; Scanlon, 2013). It appears that many districts are building their Rtl system around the requirements of the SLD rule. Districts who choose to build their system of support around the SLD rule may be limiting the number of literacy skills taught rather than encompassing the broad range of knowledge necessary for proficiency in the Common Core.



**Evidence:**

***Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document***

“In a multi-level system of support, schools employ the three essential elements of Rtl at varying levels of intensity based upon student responsiveness to instruction and intervention. These elements do not work in isolation. Rather, all components of the visual model inform and are impacted by the others; this relationship forms Wisconsin’s vision for Rtl.” (Pg. 4)

“In Wisconsin, Response to Intervention (Rtl) is defined as a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students. Rigorous implementation of Rtl includes a combination of high quality instructional practice, balanced assessment, and collaboration, all of which are infused with culturally responsive practices. Further, Rtl systems use a multi-level system of support to identify and respond to student need. Implementation of a multi-level system of support includes meaningful family involvement, data-based decision making and effective leadership. Comprehensive Rtl implementation will contribute to increased instructional quality, equitable access to high quality and effective programming, and will assist with the identification and support of learners with varied abilities and needs. The Wisconsin Rtl Roadmap (page 8) illustrates how the three essential elements function within an enacted Rtl system and how the system adjusts to meet the needs of students.” (Pg. 7)

“Wisconsin’s vision for Rtl addresses both academics and behavior, employs culturally responsive practices within each of the three essential elements, and uses a strengths-based model to systematically provide ALL students with the supports they need to succeed. Wisconsin stakeholders have developed the following guiding principles that provide the philosophical underpinning to Rtl and also serve as a reflective checkpoint to assess an enacted system:

- Rtl is for ALL children and ALL educators
- Rtl must support and provide value to effective practices
- Success for Rtl lies within the classroom through collaboration
- Rtl applies to both academics and behavior
- Rtl supports and provides value to the use of multiple assessments to inform instructional practices
- Rtl is something you do and not necessarily something you buy
- Rtl emerges from and supports research and evidence-based practice.” (Pg. 7)

<http://rti.dpi.wi.gov/files/rti/pdf/rti-guiding-doc.pdf>

“It is important to note that schools should not develop their multi-level system of supports solely based on the SLD rule. While the SLD rule has very specific requirements for intervention and progress monitoring, there are numerous exemplary interventions and progress monitoring practices both available and in place in school that may not meet the criteria in the SLD rule but produce valuable changes in student learning. As such, schools should not abandon these

practices simply because they don't meet the standard set by the SLD rule. Instead, schools may wish to establish systems in which intensity of progress monitoring and intervention increases with intensity of student learning need."

**Revised SLD Criteria.** Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Webinar. March 2013

<http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=944611#anchor>

"The concept of RTI builds on recommendations made by the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002) that students with disabilities should first be considered general education students, embracing a model of prevention as opposed to a model of failure (National Association of State Directors of Special Education and Council of Administrators of Special Education, 2006). A prevention model intends to rectify a number of longstanding problems, including the disproportionate representation of minorities and English-language learners (ELLs) among those identified as learning disabled and the need to wait for documented failure before services are provided."

"The Commission finds it productive to think of RTI as a comprehensive, systemic approach to teaching and learning designed to address language and literacy problems for all students through increasingly differentiated and intensified language and literacy assessment and instruction. Qualified professionals with appropriate expertise should provide this instruction. As such, RTI is a process that cuts across general, compensatory, and special education, and is not exclusively a general or special education initiative. The Commission takes the position that carefully selected assessment, dedication to differentiated instruction, quality professional development, and genuine collaboration across teachers, specialists, administrators, and parents are among the factors important for the success of RTI."

**Response to Intervention: Guiding Principles for Educators from the International Reading Association, 2009**

[http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Resources/RTI\\_brochure\\_web.pdf](http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Resources/RTI_brochure_web.pdf)

## **2. Can I use an intervention that addresses more than one of the areas of SLD?**

### **Answer:**

One intervention can address more than one area of concern. The SLD rule does not require a separate intervention for each area of concern. However, the rule does require at least two interventions for each area of concern being considered. The rule also requires that progress monitoring be conducted for each area of concern. For example, if there is concern about a student's fluency and comprehension, one intervention could address both areas, but separate progress monitoring must be conducted for each area, fluency and comprehension.

### **Evidence:**

"Depending on the areas of concern and the intervention, it is possible for one intervention to address more than one area of concern.

When progress data collected during SRBIs is to be used to make an SLD eligibility decision, the data must be sufficient to address the area(s) of concern. The individuals or group responsible for selecting SRBIs should be aware it is possible for an intervention to be too limited or too broad. For example, an IEP team may have difficulty analyzing a student's progress in the area of basic reading if the intervention was limited to improving rhyming skills. Similarly, the IEP team may be unable to analyze progress in this area if the intervention was broadly targeted at general reading skills and did not include explicit instruction in decoding skills."

"The IEP team must consider at least two SRBIs for each area of concern. If an intervention addresses more than one area of concern, it may be used. For example, if an SRBI used with the student addresses both reading decoding and reading fluency and meets the standards set in Wis. Admin. Code § PI 11.36 (6) (c) 2. b., then it can be used as one of the two required interventions for both reading decoding and reading fluency.

Interventions for any one area of concern must be implemented consecutively. However, if there is more than one area of concern, the two interventions for each area may be implemented concurrently."

[SLD FAQ, WI Dept. of Public Instruction Updated January 26, 2015, p.11](#)