

Listening Session at OSEP National EC Conference

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Background and Process

- RTI Joint Position Statement will be developed collaboratively, in a similar manner to the development of the DEC-NAEYC joint position statement on inclusion with NPDCI supporting the effort.
- Three national association (DEC, National Head Start Association, NAEYC) will have 4 workgroup members representing stakeholder groups at all levels of the system.
- The workgroup will also include 12 national experts.
- NAEYC is seeking funding for a one-day face-to-face meeting for workgroup.
- Process for developing the position statement will take place over a two year timeline.
 - Association stakeholders will react to draft
 - Input will be solicited from targeted groups
 - Draft document will be brought back to 3 National Association Boards
 - Then distributed to the field for validation
 - Seeking endorsements from other organizations

Question: What will the age focus of the position statement be?

Response: This will be one of the things discussed by experts. Birth to 8 is the focus of NAEYC and DEC, but there is already some work done on school age; not much at early range. Much of the energy in the country is 3-5 year olds which is where they may start but there would be potential to extend and connect in both directions – infant/toddlers and primary. Preschool RTI work will be watched carefully by Kindergarten.

Comments:

- Focus on preschool age makes sense
- Keep in the forefront what is developmentally appropriate
- Will be important for local programs to understand RTI and relation to referral systems
- Could lend itself to 0-3 if it does also focus on social/emotional
- Link to K is important. Preschool promotes early identification, schools are concerned about disproportionality/over-representation, so Kindergarten children who are not referred to special ed can still benefit from intentional teaching.

Question: What domains will be focused on?

Response: There are already many pyramid models which will be built upon, e.g., Mary Louise Hemmeter, Bill Brown, Susan Sandal. Focus will most likely support learning and development in all areas of development, perhaps moving toward an integrated model focused on learning/literacy and social/emotional. There has been much attention on assessment, but there needs to be more work done on linking assessment to instructional decision-making. RTI will help focus on the linkage.

Comments:

- Tiered interventions need to be built on a solid foundation, and that doesn't exist in many programs.
- Build it into ongoing assessment, dynamic assessment.

Question: What financial supports are available? Are resources part of this discussion?

- Big B (K-12) funds can be spent on RTI in legislation under SLD; doesn't apply to preschool. In some states 611 moneys include 619 so there are some funds that may be available.
- Since there is no federal policy there are no funds attached. We can talk about it as supports for professional development so that teachers can be more intentional
- Title 1 could be used. Resources are tied to eligibility. At-risk kids could really benefit from RTI model.

Question: Where does responsibility lie?

- RTI is a general education initiative so it shouldn't become the responsibility of special ed. No SLD in preschool.
- Not even enough research on RTI in general education.
- Providers in child care who serve children with disabilities don't have qualifications to do RTI; if it becomes "mandatory" small child care centers may fold.
- New teachers hear about and are bombarded with RTI in school but not taught about it in higher education.

Question: Will it cover all settings?

Response: The new position statement will focus on center-based programs, group arrangements.

Comment:

- Assumption that all children are served in programs. Don't forget about the children who are not in programs.
- Inclusive settings are very conducive to RTI since there is already a team. Don't need to build a team from scratch.

Question: Who will be involved in implementing RTI? What is role of specialist in RTI model, and what is role of teacher to support specialist in RTI.

- Many people will play a role in RTI, including specialists who play an important role in providing services.
- Many specialists are already versed in RTI and could be good resources to general ed teachers.
- RTI for preschool is not really that different from what we already do.
- Moving toward talking about workload approach instead of caseload: activities for providing services to child; so non-direct services are part of the workload, the time element.
- Preschool special ed teachers in separate classrooms don't tend to think of others who could support them.
- Integrate training and PD across disciplines for same team of local folks. Call it an Early Learning team and have it be the same group for the different models, e.g., CSEFEL, PBS.

Question: How will families be included?

- Poverty is an issue; children are not exposed to spoken language to the same degree as other children.