

NEW TEACHER CENTER



**Centering students.
Advancing equity.**

Public Schools of Brookline

*Report on the Current Status of the District's
Response to Intervention & Child Study
Teams Implementation*

The New Teacher Center

The New Teacher Center partners with school districts nationwide to co-create thriving, inclusive cultures, where all students succeed in heart and mind. NTC's collaborative programs help build an equitable, sustainable culture in your school system and optimal learning environments in your classrooms.

Vision of NTC

We believe that every student, from preschool through high school, deserves an excellent and equitable education that empowers them to reach their full potential in classrooms, communities, and beyond.

Mission of NTC

NTC works to disrupt the predictability of educational inequities for systemically underserved students by accelerating educator effectiveness.

Background

In SY 19-20 the Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) identified districts that were disproportionately identifying students from specific subgroups for special education services.

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) is identified as having a significantly disproportionate number of Black and African American students with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

District Disproportionality Data

- 21% of PSB students in the Special Education program are categorized as having a Specific Learning Disability
- 20% of the students in SLD Category are Black or African American
- 45% did not receive general education intervention
- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data shows significant achievement gaps by race

Partnership

The Public Schools of Brookline partnered with the New Teacher Center (NTC) in effort to:

- Collaboratively develop the foundations for the district's Response to Intervention (RtI) model, uncover current understandings and set the stage for the development of an RtI model.
- Collaboratively develop the foundations for a district-wide Child Student Team (CST) model, and audit each school's current implementation of Child Study Teams and develop the foundations for a district-wide model that supports students through focused and goal-oriented cycles of inquiry to understand if a referral for Special Education services is required.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to synthesize the findings of the New Teacher Center's audit of the Public School of Brookline's existing Response to Intervention and Child Study Team models.

Methodology

The New Teacher Center conducted a series of RtI & CST related activities to gather data, identify trends and to develop recommendations. These activities included:

- Site Visits to 9 Brookline Schools
- Interviews
- Series of Focus Groups
- Classroom Observations
- Intervention Group Observations
- Attending CST Meetings
- Review of Curriculum and Intervention Materials
- Review of RtI & CST related documents

RtI Implementation Rubric

Over the course of the review, the New Teacher Center utilized the RtI Implementation Rubric. The RTI Implementation Rubric was developed by the Colorado Department of Education and is endorsed by the RTI Action Network. The RTI Action Network is dedicated to the effective implementation of Response to Intervention in school districts nationwide. Their goal is to guide educators in the large-scale implementation of RTI so that each child has access to quality instruction and that struggling students are identified early and receive the necessary supports to be successful.

The rubric serves as an overview of implementation for Response to Intervention and describes what RtI looks like across the 6 key components (problem solving, curriculum & instruction, assessment, leadership, family & community partnering, positive school climate) and across 4 growth stages (emerging, developing, operationalizing, optimizing).

Purpose of the Rubric

- Serve as an informational resource and blueprint of RtI implementation
- Measure fidelity of RtI implementation
- Assist with planning/developing an action plan

Growth Stages

- Emerging:** The goal of this stage is to build consensus and buy-in for RtI implementation
- Developing:** This stage involves designing the infrastructure to implement RtI
- Operationalizing-** During this stage, the school implements the structures that were designed during the Developing stage and works to build consistency and fidelity
- Optimizing-** Within this stage, the model is embedded and done with fidelity. Schools now focus on how effective the model is and make changes based on data to ensure it is effective

Public Schools of Brookline RtI Rubric Rating

Developed by the Colorado Department of Education and endorsed by the RTI Action Network

Component	Anchor Questions	Growth Stage Rating
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is a vision and commitment for RtI established? How are resources (e.g., personnel, time, materials, etc) aligned to support RtI implementation? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing
Problem Solving (Child Study Teams)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the PS process used to improve outcomes for students? What PD is provided to support effective and sustainable PS processes? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing
Curriculum & Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the school develop and monitor the implementation of quality instructional practices? How is equitable access for all students ensured? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What assessment academic and behavioral data does your school analyze to identify students that require additional interventions/supports? How is assessment data used to drive instructional practices for students? How is the data managed and accessed? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing
Family & Community Partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is family, school, and community partnering created and established? How is partnering used to benefit each student during universal (Tier 1), targeted (Tier 2), and intensive support (Tier 3)? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing
Positive School Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the development of a positive climate created and monitored by the staff? How is PD provided to support a positive school climate and culture? 	Emerging Developing Operationalizing Optimizing

Leadership

Anchor Questions:

- How is a vision and commitment for RtI established?
- How are resources (e.g., personnel, time, materials, etc) aligned to support RtI implementation?

Current Growth Stage: Developing

- The District is in the developing stage of creating a clear vision for RtI
- The District supports collaborative problem solving approaches and each school has an existing Child Study Team
- Each school operates autonomously and has varying levels of RtI implementation.
- Each school has Math & Literacy Specialists; how they provide support and schedule intervention support varies greatly

Recommendations:

- The District should develop a uniform vision for Response to Intervention and Child Study Teams
- The District's vision for RtI/CST should be clearly articulated to school leadership, CST Leads and all staff so there is a clear and common understanding of the model(s) and related policies & procedures
- Professional Development should be provided to all School Leadership Teams & CST Leads so they can provide additional training, support & guidance to their school teams and ensure compliance

Problem Solving (Child Study Teams)

Anchor Questions:

- How is the PS process used to improve outcomes for students?
- What PD is provided to support effective and sustainable PS processes?

Current Growth Stage: Operationalizing

- Child Study Team(s) follow established agendas and problem solving protocols to review students whom are referred to the CST
- Schools utilize various data collection tools and analysis processes
- The District holds regular CST Lead meetings to provide training and resources

Recommendations:

- School CST data should be tracked at the district level to progress monitor referrals, interventions, trends and also identify any schools that are disproportionality referring students for special education evaluation prior to implementing Rtl process
- The District should review how intervention is scheduled to ensure scheduling and tiered intervention support aligns with the District's vision and maximizes the use of staff to meet the diverse learning needs of all students
- The District should review the role/responsibilities of Content Specialist and other personnel that support RTI implementation to ensure the expectations are consistent and clear and also how they can leverage their expertise to provide professional development for their school site teams

Curriculum & Instruction

Anchor Questions:

- How does the school develop and monitor the implementation of quality instructional practices?
- How is equitable access for all students ensured?

Current Growth Stage: Developing

- The District has recently adopted new curriculum and intervention programs including a Dyslexia Screener for grades K-2
- Teachers & Content Specialist are spending a significant amount of time adapting the curriculum and use various literacy interventions
- There is not a District wide math intervention program and school teams reported that Math Content Specialist(s) often do not have time built into their schedule(s) to provide math intervention to students
- Each school supplements the core curriculum in different ways so there is not clear content alignment/pacing across all campuses

Recommendations:

- District Leadership should develop a review process to measure the degree and quality of implementation of instructional practices
- School Leadership & Content Specialist should provide ongoing Professional Development on Tiered Interventions and differentiation strategies
- District & School Leadership need to provide clear guidance on intervention block and how that class should be structured, what intervention materials should be used and how to use the time most effectively

Assessment

Anchor Questions:

- What assessment academic and behavioral data does your school analyze to identify students that require additional interventions/supports?
- How is assessment data used to drive instructional practices for students?
- How is the data managed and accessed?

Current Growth Stage: Operationalizing

- Schools are aligned in the core curriculum and literacy interventions but there is a great deal of variation across schools and a need for District wide curriculum expectations and the use of evidence based interventions
- District Wide SEL screener (Panorama) is implemented to identify students who require additional SEL and/or behavioral supports

Recommendations:

- The District should align core curriculum, evidence based intervention programs and supplemental curriculum across all schools so there are clear expectations for all grade level and content area teachers and use of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)
- District Leadership & Content Specialist should offer ongoing Professional Development for curriculum implementation and evidence based instructional practices and interventions

Family & Community Partnering

Anchor Questions:

- How is family, school, and community partnering created and established?
- How is partnering used to benefit each student during universal (Tier 1), targeted (Tier 2), and intensive support (Tier 3)?

Current Growth Stage: Developing

- The District has allocated several School Counselors, Behavior Specialist and other staff to support students Social Emotional and behavioral needs
- The District has partnerships with many community agencies including Brookline Mental Health, Brookline Thrives and Brookline Food Pantry to coordinate additional support, services and resources to students and families
- Schools have varying degrees of parent/guardian/student engagement and participation in the CST process

Recommendations:

- The District should develop uniform policy on parent/guardian communication and participation in the CST process
- The District should offer opportunities for parent/guardian engagement and to share information about the curriculum, instructional program and available resources
- The District should review staffing patterns and develop staffing allocation formula to ensure that staff is equitably distributed based on data and student need

Positive School Climate

Anchor Questions:

- How is the development of a positive climate created and monitored by the staff?
- How is PD provided to support a positive school climate and culture?

Current Growth Stage: Operationalizing

- School Leadership and staff provide classroom management resources for promoting appropriate behavior and reducing inappropriate behavior
- All schools offer tiered behavioral interventions which include social skills, counseling, lunch groups, SEL Screeners, surveys
- SEL and Behavioral tiered intervention implementation does vary by school and the allocation of Counselors, BCBA's and Social Adjustment Counselors varies by school

Recommendations:

- District should offer guidance on universal school wide Positive Behavioral Interventions strategies to increase engagement
- District & School Leadership should develop staffing allocation based on behavioral data to ensure equity of SEL/behavioral staff across all campuses

Conclusion

The New Teacher Center has partnered with the Public Schools of Brookline to support the initial planning, development and implementation of the Response to intervention & Child Study Team models

Public Schools of Brookline RtI & CST Action Plan

	Short Term Priorities	Longer Term Priorities
Leadership	Review Findings Report and provide Initial PD for District & School Leaders to develop common goals & priorities	Create RtI Committee to Develop Goals and Success Metrics for RtI/CST Implementation
Problem Solving (Child Study Teams)	Communicate required policies/procedures for CST understanding that some aspects are still in progress	Create District RtI/CST Data Dashboard to progress monitor referrals, trends and identify schools that are disproportionality referring students for special education evaluation prior to implementing RTI Process
Curriculum & Instruction	Review core curriculum implementation and Tier 1 instructional practices to ensure they address the diverse learning needs of all students i.e ELL, Students with Disabilities and students who require Tier 2 and Tier 3 strategies/support	Create Guidance Document on district required/recommended HQIM & Evidence-Based intervention Programs to use for ELA, Math & other Content Areas
Assessment	District to review current academic and behavioral assessments & screeners being utilized to determine if there are additional needs	District & School Leaders develop guidance document on required assessments, screeners and offer PD on how to analyze data on ongoing basis and ensure alignment with Tiered Intervention needs of students
Family & Community Partnering	The District should develop uniform policy on parent/guardian communication and participation in the CST process	The District should review staffing patterns and develop staffing allocation formula to ensure that staff is equitably distributed based on data and student need
Positive School Culture	District should offer guidance on universal school wide Positive Behavioral Interventions strategies to increase engagement	District & School Leadership should develop staffing allocation based on behavioral data to ensure equity of SEL/behavioral staff across all campuses