NC Literacy Interventions Guiding Document

Purpose:

The purpose of the NC Literacy Intervention Guiding Document is to describe best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating effective literacy intervention systems. This document will guide the local school administrative unit's completion of the District Intervention Plan and aligns literacy intervention practices to the NC Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Framework.

Literacy Interventions Best Practices:

1. Screen all students for potential reading problems.
2. Provide differentiated core reading instruction for all students.
3. Provide systematic supplemental support (tier 2) for students who require intervention based on data decision rules.
4. Provide intensive support (tier 3) for students who demonstrate minimal progress with supplemental support.
5. Monitor the progress of students receiving supplemental and intensive support regularly.

Information provided in this document is adapted from:

Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C.M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., and Tilly, W.D. (2008). Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to Intervention and multi-tier intervention for reading in the primary grades. A practice guide. (NCEE 2009-4045). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ publications/practiceguides/

Spear-Swerling, Louise (2015). *The Power of RTI and Reading Profiles: A Blueprint for Solving Reading Problems.* Paul H. Brooks Publishing Co., Inc.

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Best Practice #1: Screen all students for potential reading problems.

Universal screening is the practice of screening all students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to determine the effectiveness of core instruction as well as to determine groups of students who may potentially experience reading difficulties. Universal screening measures should be efficient, valid, reliable, and demonstrate classification accuracy. Early literacy screening should include measures that are able to determine and align to a likely cause of reading difficulty (i.e., word recognition/decoding and/or language comprehension).

High-Quality Standards	*Connections to a Multi-Tiered System of Support*
1. Select a set of efficient screening measures (DIBELS 8) that identify children at risk for poor reading outcomes with reasonable accuracy. 2. Create school-level teams (e.g., data team, MTSS team) to facilitate universal screening, data analysis, and progress monitoring. School-level teams: 　a. Determine a regular meeting schedule following screening windows. 　b. Analyze data at the school, grade, and classroom levels to determine: 　　i. Overall effectiveness of instruction and determine changes needed. 　　ii. Groups of students requiring intervention. 3. Determine and use data decision rules to identify the effectiveness of core instruction and determine groups of students at risk for developing reading difficulties.	*Selection of Universal Screening measures* Universal screening measures are a part of a comprehensive assessment plan. 　☐ Comprehensive Assessment Plan Template *School-Level Teams* School-level teams meet at regular intervals to facilitate universal screening and analyze screening data to apply data decision rules. 　☐ School Team Membership and meeting schedule 　☐ Protocols to analyze data at the school, grade, and classroom levels *Data Decision Rules* Data Decision Rules are decision points developed at the district or school level that address the following questions: 　☐ How will we determine if our core instruction is effective for our population? 　☐ How will we determine if students are at risk? 　☐ How will we address risk: core, supplemental or intensive support? 　☐ How will we determine if our interventions and intervention systems are effective? 　☐ How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

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Best Practice #2: Provide differentiated core reading instruction for all students

Core instruction is the instruction provided to all students. Core literacy instruction is evidence-based and aligned to the Science of Reading. Within core instruction, teachers differentiate to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. The standards below describe both core literacy instruction and the features that separate differentiated instruction from intervention (intervention is described in best practices #3 and #4).

High-Quality Standards	*Connections to a Multi-Tiered System of Support*
1. Select and utilize a curriculum that addresses the components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) and is aligned to the Science of Reading. a. Curriculum includes the materials and resources utilized in schools and classrooms. Chosen curriculum aligns to the NC State Board of Education Literacy Instruction Standards. 2. Use data to differentiate literacy instruction. Differentiated instruction: a. Occurs for all students, which sets it apart from intervention. b. Includes varied time, content, and scaffolding.	*Core Literacy Materials and Resources* Districts and schools select core literacy materials and resources that address the components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) and are aligned to the Science of Reading. ☐ Selecting evidence-based materials and resources ☐ Defining and Refining Core support *Differentiated Instruction* Differentiated instruction occurs for all students, setting it apart from intervention, which only occurs for groups of students who may potentially experience reading difficulties.

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Best Practice #3: Provide systematic supplemental instruction (tier 2) for students who require intervention based on data decision rules.

Systematic supplemental support (sometimes called supplemental intervention or tier 2 intervention) occurs within a well-designed, well-implemented intervention system. The features of systematic supplemental support described below are determined at the district or school level with a team approach.It is not the sole responsibility of individual teachers. Both defined core instruction and universal screening with determined data decision rules are required for systematic supplemental instruction.

High-Quality Standards	*Connections to a Multi-Tiered System of Support*

1. Curriculum: Select and utilize materials and resources that address the components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) and are aligned to both the core literacy curricula and the Science of Reading.
 	
Intervention materials and resources:
a. Address the most common areas of need by grade level.
   • Kindergarten and first grade: define one intervention that addresses the underpinning skills to word recognition/decoding, including phonological and phonemic awareness, letter-sound identification, and beginning phonics. The goal of these intervention protocols is to equip students with the skills to decode words in connected text.
   • Second and third grades define two intervention protocols:
      ○ One that addresses word recognition/decoding (advanced phonics, structural analysis, applied phonics, fluency with connected text).
      ○ One that addresses deficits in Language Comprehension (fluency with connected text, vocabulary, and comprehension).
 	
b. Build skills gradually and follow a prescribed scope and sequence. For example, an intervention scope and sequence may progress from identifying individual letters and sounds to decoding one or two syllable types during the progression of the intervention.
 	
c. Are multi-componential in that they address more than one foundational reading skill at a time (Spear-Swerling 2015). For example, the intervention lessons likely include instruction in phonemic awareness (e.g., tapping letter sounds, segmenting sounds in words), then phonics (e.g., after tapping sounds, identifying grapheme tiles corresponding with the phonemes), writing (e.g., writing the words using phoneme/grapheme mapping), and fluency (e.g., reading the words in isolation, short phrases, and then connected text).
	Curriculum
	Districts and schools select intervention materials and resources that address the common areas of need in each grade level. When delivered in an intervention setting, these curricula are a part of a standard protocol. Intervention curriculum:
	☐ Are evidence-based
	☐ Address common areas of need
	☐ Align to core literacy curricula and the Science of Reading
	☐ Align to district and school resources
	☐ Are evaluated regularly for effectiveness and implementation fidelity.
	
	The intervention curriculum builds skills gradually and follows a prescribed scope and sequence.
	☐ Sample intervention scope and sequence
	
	Intervention curriculum and lessons are multi-componential, that is they address more than one and foundational reading skill at a time.
	☐ Sample intervention lesson plan

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2. <u>Environment:</u> The intervention environment is implemented as intended and the guidance below should not be used in place of intervention curriculum recommendations. Defined features of the intervention environment include:
   a. Instructor: Often, the intensity described below is beyond the available time of the individual classroom teacher. Districts and schools designate appropriately trained staff to instruct interventions.
   b. Group size: intervention delivered to groups of 3 - 4 students.
   c. Length: intervention implemented three to five times a week for approximately 20 - 40 minutes.
   d. Duration: intervention implemented for at least five weeks.

Environment
Features of the intervention are defined so that the intervention can be implemented.
- ☐ Intervention delivery options
- ☐ NCII Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity

3. <u>Instruction:</u> Instruct with evidence-based practices which are systematic and explicit. The intervention instruction builds skills gradually, provides a high level of teacher-student interaction, and provides opportunities for practice and feedback.
Intervention instruction is:
   a. Systematic: Instruction should build skills gradually, introducing first in isolation and then moving to contextual application.
   b. Explicit: Instruction includes "overt and unambiguous explanations and models."
Intervention instruction provides opportunities for:
   a. Practice: Instructor provides ample opportunities for student practice.
   b. Feedback: Instructor delivers timely, corrective feedback.

Instruction
- ☐ Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

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Best Practice #4: Provide daily intensive support (tier 3) for students who demonstrate minimal progress with supplemental support.

Individualized intensive support (sometimes called intensive intervention or tier 3 intervention) occurs within a well-designed, well-implemented intervention system. The features of individualized intensive support described below are determined at the district or school level with a team approach. It is not the sole responsibility of individual teachers. Both defined core instruction and universal screening with determined data decision rules are required for individualized intensive instruction.

High-Quality Standards	*Connections to a Multi-Tiered System of Support*
1. <u>Individualized Support Resources:</u> Plan and individualize intensive support within a school-level team. a. School-level teams, not individual teachers, examine the effectiveness of supplemental interventions and analyze student progress. When supplemental interventions are proven effective, yet individual students are not making sufficient progress, intensification and further individualization of the intervention is likely warranted. b. Data-based individualization of interventions often includes gathering additional diagnostic assessment information.	*Individualized Support Resources* ☐ NCII Data-based individualization ☐ Intensifying Literacy Instruction: Essential Practices
2. <u>Curriculum:</u> Select and utilize a curriculum that addresses the components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) and is aligned to both the core literacy curricula and the Science of Reading. This curriculum may be the same that is utilized in supplemental support with the foci and adjustments listed below. *Intervention curriculum:* a. Addresses the individualized need planned by the school-level team. The individualization is prescribed in response to diagnostic assessment. In many cases, intervention will focus on phonemic awareness and decoding, with the goal of the interventions being to equip students with the skills to decode words in connected text. b. Focus on few, but high-priority reading skills. While the focus of supplemental support is following a scope and sequence that aligns with the most common areas of need by grade level, intensive support requires narrowing the focus to a smaller set of high-priority skills. Intensive support should continue to follow an instructional scope and sequence, but the application meets individual student needs.	*Curriculum* Districts and schools select intervention materials and resources that address the common areas of need in each grade level. Intervention curriculum: ☐ Are evidence-based ☐ Address common areas of need ☐ Align to core literacy curricula and the Science of Reading ☐ Align to district and school resources ☐ Are evaluated regularly for effectiveness and implementation fidelity.

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3. Environment: The intervention is implemented as intended and the guidance below should not be used in place of intervention curriculum recommendations. Defined features of the intervention environment include:
 	
   a. Instructor: Often, the intensity described below is beyond the available time of the individual classroom teacher. Districts and schools designate appropriately trained staff to instruct interventions.
   b. Group size: intensive intervention consists of both small group (3 - 4 students) and one-on-one instruction. It is not recommended that all intensive support be delivered in a one-one-one setting. One-on-one instruction should be included in intensive intervention focusing on practice opportunities and providing immediate, corrective feedback.
   c. Length: intervention implemented daily for approximately 20 - 40 minutes.
   d. Duration: it is recommended that intensive intervention be implemented for at least five weeks.
	Environment
	Features of the intervention are defined so that the intervention can be implemented.
	  ☐ Intervention delivery options
	  ☐ NCII Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity

4. Instruction: As with supplemental instruction, intensive intervention instruction includes evidence-based practices which are systematic and explicit. Intensive intervention instruction builds skills gradually, provides a high level of teacher-student interaction, and provides additional opportunities for practice and feedback. Adjustments from supplemental to intensive support are most often seen in the instructional practices described below:
 	
   a. Pace: adjust overall intervention pace.
   b. Scaffolding: Scaffold instruction by breaking down complex skills into steps, intentionally designing lessons to begin with simple skills before moving to complex skills, modeling and demonstrating skills, using resources (e.g., checklist, diagrams) during practice.
   c. Modeling and Practice: provide modeling and practice opportunities sufficient for students to demonstrate sustained and consistent levels of proficiency.
   d. Mastery: ensure students demonstrate mastery before moving to the next skill.
   e. Feedback: monitor practice and provide immediate feedback.
   f. Engaging instruction: provide a high level of teacher-student interaction.
   g. Clarity of instruction: identify specific learning intentions for the lesson and use clear language while teaching.
	Instruction
	  ☐ Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

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Best Practice #5: Monitor the progress of students receiving supplemental instruction regularly.	
High-Quality Standards	*Connections to a Multi-Tiered System of Support*
Progress monitoring is the practice of regular assessment in order to determine the effectiveness of interventions and ensure students are making progress. Progress monitoring data are used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, measure student growth over time, inform instructional decisions, and measure response to intervention or instruction. Progress monitoring measures are selected to align with universal screening measures (see best practice #1).	

1. Select progress monitoring tools and measures.
   a. Select progress monitoring tools (DIBELS 8) that the district and/or school support with training, support, and analysis. Progress monitoring tools should demonstrate the same technical adequacy characteristics described in best practice #1. Ideally, progress monitoring tools align with screening tools.
   b. Select progress monitoring measures (e.g., NWF, ORF). Progress monitoring measures should align with the areas identified for intervention. Progress monitoring measures do not drive the content of the intervention, instead they represent the best indication of the mastery of intervention content.
   c. Select the progress monitoring level.
 	
2. Monitor progress more frequently as the intensity of the intervention increases. The frequency of progress monitoring balances avoiding excessive assessment while providing sufficient data to make decisions about response to intervention. Therefore, the frequency of progress monitoring should be determined in concert with the length of the intervention.
   a. Supplemental: Monitor progress 1 - 2 times per month
   b. Intensive: Monitor progress 2 - 4 times per month
 	
3. Analyze progress monitoring data regularly. School-level teams should systematically analyze the progress monitoring data for intervention groups on a regular basis (e.g., every 3 - 4 weeks). This analysis follows a problem-solving model and includes data (e.g., intervention fidelity, student attendance) in addition to progress monitoring data. School-level teams:
   a. Apply data-decision rules.
   b. Determine group response to the intervention. When most students in the group are not responding to the intervention, the intervention must be examined before making decisions about individual student progress. Individual student progress with intervention can never be ascertained outside of the context of the group (e.g., whole school, grade level, whole intervention group). One student's non-response to intervention is not meaningful without assurance of appropriate instruction/intervention, which must be determined within the context of the other students receiving similar instruction/intervention.
   c. Interpret graphed progress monitoring data for individual students.
	Select Progress Monitoring Tools and Measures
	☐ MTSS Assessment Guidelines
	☐ Progress Monitoring Tool Selection
	☐ DIBELS 8 Administration and Scoring Guide
	
	Frequency of Progress Monitoring
	☐ MTSS Assessment Guidelines
	☐ DIBELS 8 Administration and Scoring Guide (pages 95-96)
	
	Analyzing Progress Monitoring
	☐ MTSS Assessment Guidelines
	☐ DIBELS 8 Administration and Scoring Guide (pages 96-98)

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