



Read to Achieve

Diagnostic and Intervention Services

Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve Program 2011-2012



COLLABORATIVE CENTER FOR

LITERACY

DEVELOPMENT

Susan Chambers Cantrell, Ed.D.

Margaret Rintamaa, Ed.D.

Melissa A. Murphy, M.S.

Jessica Cunningham, Ph.D.

September 1, 2012



The mission of the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development is to promote literacy and address the diverse needs of all learners through professional development of Kentucky educators and research that informs policy and practice.

EVALUATION OF KENTUCKY'S READ TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM
2011-2012

Susan Chambers Cantrell, Ed.D.

Margaret Rintamaa, Ed.D.

Melissa A. Murphy, M.S.

Jessica Cunningham, Ph.D.

Collaborative Center for Literacy Development

University of Kentucky

September 1, 2012

Acknowledgements

The authors of this report gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the following individuals: Elisha Comer, administrative assistant; Shelley Baker, Jo Davis, and Kelli Helmers, field researchers; Whitney Zigler, research assistant; Jan Carter, research faculty; and Kim Whilhoit, KDE RTA program coordinator.

The authors wish to express their gratitude to the external advisory panel members who gave helpful feedback on the design of this evaluation and on an earlier draft of the evaluation report. All panel members are nationally recognized experts in the area of early reading and all have conducted influential research on early reading practices and programs for students who have difficulty learning to read. Their insightful recommendations are incorporated throughout the report. The advisory panel members and their institutional affiliations are as follows:

Anne McGill Franzen, Ph.D.

University of Tennessee

Ellen McIntyre, Ed. D.

North Carolina State University

Doris Walker-Dalhouse, Ph.D.

Marquette University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Executive Summary	i
Overview of the Evaluation	ii
Implementation Study Findings and Recommendations.....	ii
RTA Teachers: Their Characteristics and their Work	ii
RTA Students: Literacy Instruction and Experiences	iii
Stakeholders' Perception of RTA	iv
RTA and RtI Systems	iv
Achievement Study Findings and Recommendations	v
Proficiency at the End of and After Primary	v
Achievement across One Year	vi
Chapter One: Background and Evaluation Overview	1:1
RTA Program History	1:1
Program Requirements	1:2
Prior Evaluation Finding	1:2
Overview of Current Study.....	1:3
Research Questions	1:3
Overview of Evaluation Design and Data Sources	1:4
Evaluation Report Organization	1:4
Chapter Two: Statewide Implementation	2:1
Evaluation Methods	2:1
RTA Teacher Surveys	2:1
Administrator Surveys	2:1
Classroom Teacher Survey	2:2
RTA Teacher Records	2:2
Survey Results	2:2
RTA Teachers: Who are they and what do they do?	2:2
RTA Students: What are their experiences?	2:10
Educators' Perception of RTA	2:14
RTA in Schools' System of Interventions	2:16
Summary	2:21
Chapter Three: Case Studies of Local Implementation	3:1
Evaluation Methods	3:1
Selection and Description of Schools	3:1
Data Sources, Data Collection and Analysis Procedures	3:5

Site Visit Findings	3:7
RTA Teachers: Who are they and what do they do?	3:7
RTA Students: What are their experiences?	3:8
Instruction for RTA Upper Primary Students	3:9
Teacher Ratings for RTA Students	3:13
Stakeholders' Perceptions of RTA	3:15
RTA as Support for System of Interventions	3:22
Findings from Comparison Non-RTA Schools	3:25
Systems of Interventions	3:26
Need for Funding	3:27
Summary	3:27
 Chapter Four: Student Achievement	 4:1
Data Sources	4:1
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	4:1
Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)	4:1
RTA Students' Reading Performance after RTA	4:2
RTA Students in Third Grade	4:5
RTA Students in Fourth Grade	4:6
RTA Students in Fifth Grade	4:6
2010-2011 RTA Students' Reading Progress	4:7
Summary	4:9
 Chapter Five: Summary of Findings and Recommendations	 5:1
RTA Implementation	5:1
RTA Teachers: Their Characteristics and their Work	5:1
RTA Students: Literacy Instruction and Experiences	5:2
Stakeholders' Perception of RTA	5:3
RTA and RtI Systems	5:3
RTA Students' Reading Achievement	5:4
Proficiency at the End of and After Primary	5:4
Achievement across One Year	5:5
Recommendations for Future Evaluations	5:5
 Appendices	
A: RTA 2011 Program Evaluation: Classroom Teacher Survey.....	A:1
B: RTA 2011 Program Evaluation: Administrator Survey.....	B:1
C: Descriptions of Intervention Programs	C:1

D: RTA Field Observer Interview Guides	D:1
Kentucky Read to Achieve Principal Interview Guide 2011-12	D:1
Kentucky Read to Achieve Intervention Teacher Interview Guide 2011-12	D:3
Kentucky Read to Achieve Classroom Teacher Interview Guide 2011-12	D:6
E: Observation Codes and Description	E:1
F: Description of Field Observer Training	F:1
G: Classroom Observation Coding Results from Entire Sample	G:1
H: Comparison of All Observation Codes	H:1
I: RTA Parent Survey	I:1
J: Academic Rating Scales	J:1
Academic Rating Scale (First Grade)	J:1
Academic Rating Scale (Second Grade)	J:4
Academic Rating Scale (Third Grade)	J:7
K: Teacher Scoring Rubric	K:1

Figures

2.1: Average Number of Students (and Range) Eligible, Receiving, and Exiting RTA Intervention by School as reported by RTA Teachers	2:4
2.2: RTA Teacher Report of the Quality of Training for Intervention	2:5
2.3: Percentage of RTA and Classroom Teachers reporting Collaboration regarding RTA Students	2:9
2.4: RTA Teachers' report of Leadership Activities at their School	2:10
2.5: RTA Teachers' report of RTA Students' time spent in RTA Intervention	2:14
2.6: Administrators' perceptions of the Effectiveness of their School's RTA Intervention Program by Grade Level	2:16
2.7: Percentage of Classroom Teachers reporting Supports for Struggling Readers	2:20
3.1: Geographic Regions of Kentucky	3:2

3.2: Comparisons of Significant Differences in the Observation Codes for RTA Classroom, Regular Literacy Classroom, and the Whole Sample	3:11
4.1: Overview of RTA Interventions	4:3

Tables

1.1: RTA Funding and Number of Schools Participating in RTA 2005-2012.....	1:1
2.1: Number and Percent of Teachers reporting Intervention Programs by Grade	2:3
2.2: RTA Teacher report of Hours of Training by Intervention Type	2:6
2.3: RTA Teacher and Administrator report of Additional Roles and Responsibilities	2:7
2.4: Communication and Collaboration with RTA Teachers	2:8
2.5: Number of Students and Average Number of Days by Grade Level Receiving an RTA Intervention in Fall or Spring	2:11
2.6: Number of Students and Average Number of Days by Grade Level Receiving an RTA Intervention in Fall and Spring	2:12
2.7: Assessment Measures Utilized in RTA Student Selection	2:13
2.8: Classroom Teacher Perception of Effectiveness of RTA Intervention	2:15
2.9: RTA Team Membership, Activities, and Meetings	2:18
2.10: RTA Intervention Involvement	2:19
2.11: Mean Ranking for the Responsibility for the Reading Achievement of RTA Students	2:21
3.1: Case Study School Demographics	3:3
3.2: Case Study Schools Intervention Programs by Grade Level	3:4
3.3: Matched School Demographics	3:5
3.4: Significant Comparison of Observation Code for RTA Classroom, Regular Literacy Classroom, and the Whole Sample	3:12

3.5: Teacher Rating of Second Grade Student Progress	3:14
3.6: Teacher Rating of Third Grade Student Progress	3:15
3.7: Survey Results of Parent Perceptions of RTA	3:21
3.8: Case Study School Rtl Holistic Scores	3:24
3.9: Overall Mean Scores for Case Study Schools	3:25
4.1: ITBS Grade Equivalent Score Overall Frequencies by Grade Level	4:4
4.2: ITBS Third Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions	4:5
4.3: ITBS Fourth Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions	4:6
4.4: ITBS Fifth Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions	4:7
4.5: 2011 RIT Target Scores for Fall and Spring Administrations	4:7
4.6: Percentage of RTA School Students Meeting RIT Target for Fall and Spring	4:8
4.7: Percentage of Students Receiving an RTA Intervention Meeting RIT Target Score for Fall and Spring	4:9
F1: Interrater Reliability by Level across Raters	F:1
G1: Classroom Observation Results by the Whole Sample	G:1
H1: Comparison of Observation Codes for RTA Classroom, Regular Classroom, and the Whole Sample	H:1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Read to Achieve program (RTA) was established in 2005 by the Kentucky General Assembly. RTA is a reading diagnostic and intervention program designed to ensure all students read proficiently by the end of the primary grades. The RTA fund imparts renewable, two-year grants to schools primarily to hire an intervention teacher who provides short-term intensive instruction to students who struggle with reading. In 2011-2012, RTA grants were awarded to 322 elementary schools in Kentucky. Each school received an estimated \$48,500 to implement RTA.

RTA grant applications allowed schools to choose the intervention programs they wanted to implement, and 38 different programs were selected. The most widely selected RTA programs were Reading Recovery, SRA Reading Mastery, and Houghton-Mifflin Soar to Success. Although schools were free to choose which intervention programs to implement as part of RTA, all RTA schools are required to implement programs with the following characteristics:

- Research-based, reliable, and replicable;
- Short term, intensive, not a yearlong program.
- Designed for one-on-one or small group instruction;
- Be based on on-going assessment of individual student needs;
- Be provided to a student by a highly trained teacher.

The purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of RTA in terms of implementation and student achievement. The report is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides background on RTA and outlines the evaluation questions.
- Chapter 2 provides information on statewide RTA implementation as exhibited through surveys of RTA teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators in all 322 RTA schools.
- Chapter 3 presents findings from site visits in seven RTA schools and provides data from interviews of administrators at five comparison schools.
- Chapter 4 includes analyses of 2010-2011 KCCT reading data for third, fourth, and fifth grade students who participated in RTA in the primary grades as well as an analysis of 2011-2012 MAP data in 142 RTA schools.
- Chapter 5 provides a summary of key findings and recommendations.

Overview of the Evaluation

The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development's 2011-2012 evaluation addresses both implementation and achievement. The implementation study includes three components: (a) survey data gathered from all 322 RTA schools, (b) observations, interviews, and surveys in seven RTA schools, and (c) phone interviews with administrators at matched non-RTA schools. The achievement study involves two sets of data: (a) 2010-2011 state reading assessment data (KCCT) from all 322 RTA schools, and (b) fall and spring scores on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP, reading) for 142 RTA schools that administer MAP in their districts.

The key research questions this evaluation addresses are as follows:

Implementation Study Questions

- RTA teachers: Who are they, and what do they do?
- RTA students: What are their experiences?
- What are stakeholders' perceptions of RTA?
- To what extent does RTA support effective systems of intervention?

Achievement Study Questions

- What progress do RTA students make in reading, in terms of assessment benchmarks?
- What proportion of RTA students read proficiently at the end and after primary?

Implementation Study Findings and Recommendations

The implementation study is comprised of two components: (a) surveys of RTA teachers, administrators, and classroom teachers in all 322 RTA schools, and (b) site visits in seven RTA schools. The site visits are augmented by interviews with administrators in five comparison non-RTA schools.

RTA Teachers: Their Characteristics and their Work

In general, RTA teachers are experienced teachers with advanced degrees. Based on comparison school interviews, RTA teachers appear to be better trained than interventionists in schools without RTA funding. However, within the population of RTA schools, there is wide variation in RTA teachers' level of training to teach their intervention. RTA requires that RTA teachers be "highly trained"; yet the level of training that constitutes highly trained, beyond a minimum of three years teaching experience, is not specified in the program requirements.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) should clarify its definition of “highly trained” to ensure the state’s most vulnerable students are served by the most knowledgeable and qualified reading educators. In addition to parameters regarding years of teaching experience, KDE may consider providing parameters related to advanced education in reading instruction and training in the school’s interventions as guidelines for schools when hiring “highly trained” reading educators.

Overall, RTA teachers spend the majority of the school day and school year working with low-achieving readers. It does not appear that they engage in additional duties that pull them away from students to any larger extent than teachers serving other roles in schools. They do serve in literacy leadership roles, such as serving on RtI teams and in some cases provide professional development for their colleagues.

RTA teachers would benefit from focused professional development and support in the areas of literacy leadership, collaboration, and communication. Future KDE webinars, newsletters, and other state-level support structures might address these areas of need. RTA teachers’ focus on direct services to low-achieving readers during the school day should be maintained.

RTA Students: Literacy Instruction and Experiences

In total, 12,446 students received RTA services. Although the majority of students participate in reading intervention between 15 and 24 weeks, approximately one-third of RTA students participate for more than 24 weeks. In some schools, teachers did not appear to have clear processes for exiting students from intervention or for providing more intensive interventions for students who were not successful in RTA over the short term. There did not appear to be a clear pattern of collaboration with classroom teachers around exiting students from RTA.

KDE should provide guidance related to exiting students from RTA and support for implementing more intensive interventions for students who are not successful in RTA. School administrators should provide RTA and classroom teachers with designated time for communication and collaboration around RTA students’ needs.

In intervention classes, students received more intensive focus than in the regular classroom literacy block in reading, writing, thinking, and talking about texts. However, classroom teachers expressed concern about what RTA students miss when they leave the classroom for RTA. Whereas some schools require that RTA occur during the literacy block, other schools require that RTA occur outside the literacy block. Regardless, missing

classroom time can create additional difficulties for students who already are struggling to keep up in the classroom.

RTA and classroom teachers should work together closely to ensure RTA students do not miss critical content. Clear exiting procedures and a focus on reducing the number of weeks of RTA interventions for students are important in ensuring students are seamlessly integrated back into regular classroom activities. Further, RTA students would benefit from more focused collaboration between RTA and classroom teachers within the literacy block.

Classroom teachers still rate RTA students relatively low in critical areas of literacy, even at the end of the year. None of the second or third grade students who were rated by classroom teachers received ratings of Proficient in any of the literacy areas assessed.

Schools should focus on improving systems of support for students who continue to have difficulties with literacy even after participating in RTA. Intensive Tier 3 interventions should be implemented for students who do not successfully exit RTA. For students who do successfully exit, continued progress monitoring and ongoing classroom support should occur to ensure that literacy learning is maintained after RTA.

Stakeholders' Perceptions of RTA

The majority of stakeholders perceive RTA interventions are effective. However, some stakeholders, including administrators, held negative perceptions about interventions' effectiveness at some grades.

KDE should continue to allow schools to petition to change their interventions, and publicize the procedures for doing so. Teams responsible for RTA should ensure all teachers in the building understand RTA goals and processes. These teams should improve communication with classroom teachers about intervention systems.

RTA and RtI Systems

RTA is an integral part of schools' systems for reading intervention. School personnel usually considered the RTA intervention a Tier 2 intervention for students who are not meeting benchmarks on screening assessments. RTA schools had progress monitoring systems in place, but they did not tend to have clear processes for exiting students from RTA interventions. Also, schools did not appear to provide more intensive, targeted interventions for students who were not successful in RTA.

KDE should provide additional guidance to RTA schools about effective RtI systems including developing clear systems for exiting students from RTA, how to

support students who are not successful in RTA, and how to fund more intensive interventions.

To a large extent, classroom teachers did not report using differentiated reading instruction for students having difficulty with reading.

Increased collaboration between RTA teachers and classroom teachers within the literacy block would support differentiated instruction for RTA students. KDE should encourage RTA teachers to work with classroom teachers to support RTA students in the classroom, perhaps even working with students in the classroom literacy block when appropriate.

In matched comparison schools, administrators reported leaving a significant number of low-achieving readers under-served by interventions. Also, intervention teachers in comparison schools were in need of training to teach their intervention, according to administrators. All administrators in comparison schools reported a need for funding to support interventions for low-achieving readers.

The state legislature should expand RTA funding for more schools. Allow new rounds of funding for schools previously not eligible to apply and schools that were not successful in applying for RTA during earlier rounds.

Achievement Study Findings and Recommendations

The achievement study involved two sets of data: (a) 2010-2011 state reading assessment data from all 322 RTA schools, and (b) fall and spring scores on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for 142 RTA schools that administer MAP in their districts. State reading assessment data were from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) administered in the spring of third, fourth, and fifth grades. Data were analyzed for all students in the 322 RTA schools who had participated in RTA in one or more primary grades. 2011-2012 MAP data were analyzed for all second and third grade RTA students in 142 schools for whom data were available.

Proficiency at the End of and After Primary

Greater than 50% of third, fourth, and fifth grade students who received RTA services during the primary grades performed at or above grade level on the ITBS. Students who participated in RTA in first grade and did not participate again in any other grade performed at levels similar to students who never participated in RTA during the primary grades. Students who participated in RTA only in third grade perform at lower levels overall than students who participated in RTA only in first grade or only in second grade.

RTA schools should serve as many students as exhibit a need in kindergarten, first, and second grade. Schools should serve students who exhibit need in third grade as well, but more intensive interventions than are currently being implemented should be provided for third grade students who are not reading well.

A large number of students participated in RTA for multiple years, even across three years of primary. Students who participate in RTA for more than one year are less likely to read at or above grade level in third and intermediate grades than students who participate for just one year.

Students who remain in RTA across the primary years may be those students who were furthest behind in reading. RTA schools should provide even more intensive interventions (i.e. one-on-one) for students who continue to struggle with reading after one year of RTA. Classroom teachers and reading specialists should collaborate to implement more intensive, high-quality reading instruction for these students across the school day and year as part of a tiered Rtl program.

Achievement across One Year

A greater percentage of second and third grade students reached benchmark levels on the MAP assessment from fall to spring, although that percentage was still small. Inconsistent administration and/or reporting on the MAP seriously limited its usefulness in this evaluation.

The MAP assessment's usefulness for evaluation purposes should be re-evaluated. To ascertain RTA student gains in reading across a year at a statewide level, a common valid and reliable norm-referenced assessment should be administered consistently across all RTA schools or in a sufficient sample of schools.

Chapter 1

Background and Evaluation Overview

RTA Program History

The Read to Achieve program (RTA) was established in 2005 when the Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill 19 (SB 19). RTA is a reading diagnostic and intervention program designed to ensure students read proficiently by the end of the primary grades. The RTA fund imparts renewable, two-year grants to schools primarily to hire an intervention teacher who provides short-term intensive instruction to students who struggle with reading. The Read to Achieve Act of 2005 replaced former legislation that created the Early Reading Incentive Grant Program, which had been in place since 1998.

In 2011-2012, RTA grants were awarded to 322 elementary schools in Kentucky. Schools applied to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) requesting funds in one of four funding rounds offered between 2005 and 2008. At the height of its implementation in 2008-2009, 330 schools participated in RTA. Since that time, funding for the program and to individual schools has been reduced. Table 1.1 shows the number of schools participating in RTA between 2005 and 2011. Eight schools have opted out of the program after participating for one or more years. Other RTA schools have closed and/or merged. Some districts have only a single school participating, while several or all elementary schools in other districts have implemented RTA.

Table 1.1

RTA funding and number of schools participating in RTA 2005-2012

Fiscal Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
# of schools	99	113	212	309	330	328	324	322
Total funds	\$7.1m	\$11.1m	\$20.5581m	\$23.5581m	\$22.5581m	\$22.5581m	\$18.8824m	\$19.6936m
Average award	*	*	*	\$63,949	\$46,835	\$60,000	\$55,000	\$48,500

* Data not available.

Program Requirements

RTA grant applications allowed schools to choose the intervention programs they wanted to implement, and 38 different intervention programs were selected by RTA schools. The most widely selected RTA programs were Reading Recovery, SRA Reading Mastery, and Houghton-Mifflin Soar to Success. Currently, schools must implement the intervention programs they selected in their original grant proposals. If schools want to change the intervention programs they implement as part of RTA, they must submit a formal request to KDE and present data supporting that decision. Although schools were free to choose which intervention programs to implement as part of RTA, all RTA schools are required to implement programs with the following characteristics¹:

- Research-based, reliable, and replicable;
- Short term, intensive, not a yearlong program. “Short term” is intentionally not defined so that schools can plan programs based on individual students’ needs, not on prescribed time limits;
- Designed for one-on-one or small group instruction;
- Be based on on-going assessment of individual student needs;
- Be provided to a student by a highly trained teacher.

Participating schools must track and report to KDE all students who receive RTA services and must closely monitor RTA student performance. Also, RTA teachers must engage in ongoing professional development, such as participate in webinars hosted by KDE.

Senate Bill 19 (2005) charges the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky with creating and implementing a comprehensive research agenda to evaluate the impact of intervention programs on student achievement in reading.² To conduct these evaluations, CCLD has worked with individuals at partner institutions and, more recently, has contracted with MGT of America, Inc.

Prior Evaluation Findings

Early RTA evaluations primarily focused on reading achievement for students who participated in RTA.³ These studies indicated the majority of RTA students made more

¹ Source: RTA Assurance Statement

² From 2005-2009, KDE required RTA schools to administer a common, standardized pre- and post-assessment to all primary students, and these assessment results were used to evaluate RTA. Since 2009-2010, schools are no longer required to administer a common assessment.

³ See Rightmyer, 2008.

reading progress than expected for their age group and made greater gains than students who did not participate in RTA intervention, although the exact impact of RTA could not be determined. Prior studies indicated RTA seemed beneficial for students from under-represented groups, but achievement gaps persisted among RTA students. School-level geographic and socio-economic factors were not related to student progress in RTA. In general, no reading intervention program produced distinctly higher gain scores than other programs.

More recent RTA evaluations focused on program implementation as well as student achievement.⁴ Implementation studies found high levels of adherence to program expectations. Despite a finding that twenty percent of RTA schools reported they would like to consider implementing a different intervention, schools seemed to implement intervention programs with high fidelity. Interviews with school staff indicated schools viewed RTA as an important component in their system of interventions for struggling readers. Achievement results in recent RTA evaluations corroborated findings of earlier RTA studies, with the majority (more than 50%) of RTA students making progress and meeting benchmarks over a year's time. Assessment of third and fourth grade students who participated in RTA in the primary grades indicated more than half of students who participated in RTA in the primary grades received "proficient" or "distinguished" scores on the state reading assessment.

Overview of Current Study

CCLD's 2011-2012 evaluation addresses both implementation and achievement. The implementation study includes three components: (a) survey data gathered from all 322 RTA schools, (b) observations, interviews, and surveys in seven RTA schools, and (c) phone interviews with administrators at matched non-RTA schools. The achievement study involves two sets of data: (a) 2010-2011 state reading assessment data (KCCT) from all 322 RTA schools, and (b) fall and spring scores on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP, reading) for 142 RTA schools that administer MAP in their districts.

Research Questions

The key research questions this evaluation addresses are as follows:

Implementation Study Questions

- RTA teachers: Who are they, and what do they do?
- RTA students: What are their experiences?
- What are stakeholders' perceptions of RTA?
- To what extent does RTA support effective systems of intervention (RtI)?

⁴ MGT of America, 2010, 2011.

Achievement Study Questions

- What progress do RTA students make in reading, in terms of assessment benchmarks?
- What proportion of RTA students read proficiently at the end and after primary?

As noted in previous RTA evaluation reports, it is important to recognize other sources and methods of intervention delivery in RTA schools, in addition to RTA teachers and programs. Schools may use (a) intervention materials and programs not funded by RTA, (b) teachers not funded by RTA who teach the RTA intervention, and (c) students' participation in multiple interventions during the same year or even at the same time. It is difficult to separate the effects of these sources from the effects of RTA on students' reading achievement. Therefore, this evaluation uses methods that are primarily descriptive in nature and does not attempt to connect students' reading achievement causally to RTA.

Overview of Evaluation Design & Data Sources

The evaluation uses a multi-layered approach to answer the implementation and achievement research questions. Implementation and achievement data were collected from all 322 RTA schools. RTA teachers, administrators, and classroom teachers completed surveys related to RTA implementation, and state-level reading assessment data were collected for all RTA schools. Additional achievement data were gathered from seven RTA case study schools that implemented a common reading assessment, MAP. To gain a more in-depth understanding of RTA's value to schools, interviews were administered at five matched comparison schools.

Evaluation Report Organization

This report includes four chapters in addition to this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 provides information on statewide RTA implementation as exhibited through surveys of RTA teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators in all 322 RTA schools. Chapter 3 presents findings from site visits in seven RTA schools and provides data from interviews of administrators at five comparison schools. Chapter 4 includes analyses of 2010-2011 KCCT for third, fourth, and fifth grade students who participated in RTA in the primary grades as well as an analysis of 2011-2012 MAP data in 142 RTA schools. Chapter 5 provides a summary of key findings and recommendations. Methods for data collection for each component of the study are included in the corresponding chapters.

Chapter 2

Statewide Implementation

During the 2011-2012 school year, implementation data were collected from all 322 schools to provide a picture of the ways in which RTA was implemented across Kentucky. This chapter focuses on findings from those data, particularly related to the following research questions:

- RTA teachers: Who are they, and what do they do?
- RTA students: What are their experiences?
- What are stakeholders' perceptions of RTA?
- How does RTA support schools' systems of interventions?

Evaluation Methods

All RTA teachers, administrators, and primary-grade classroom teachers in RTA schools were invited to complete an electronic survey (Appendices A & B). CCLD collaborated with RTA staff at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to develop the content of the surveys.

RTA Teacher Surveys

RTA teachers (N = 335) were provided three different surveys at three points across the school year (September, January, and May) related to RTA program implementation and evaluation. KDE required all RTA teachers to complete these surveys, referred to as Program Evaluation Reports. These surveys asked questions about RTA teachers' experience, training/professional development, time spent teaching intervention, roles and responsibilities in their school, roles and responsibilities in their school's system of intervention, literacy interventions at their school, the number of teachers and reading interventionists at their school, etc. In total, KDE collected responses from 321 RTA teachers for Program Evaluation I (response rate = 96%), 333 teachers for Program Evaluation II (response rate = 99%), and 321 teachers for Program Evaluation III (response rate = 96%).

Administrator Survey

Administrators at each of the 322 RTA schools were asked to complete a survey about the RTA program at their school. The survey was administered by KDE in the spring of 2012. The survey was designed to assess administrator background, participation in RTA activities, RTA team membership and roles, RTA implementation, professional

development, perception of the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of RTA, and responsibilities of the RTA teacher. A total of 277 administrators completed the survey (response rate = 86%).

Classroom Teacher Survey

Primary classroom teachers completed a survey one time in the spring designed to assess teacher background, RTA implementation, professional development, participation in RTA related activities, communication and collaboration with the RTA teacher, perception of the effectiveness of RTA, and teacher self-efficacy. A total of 1,984 primary teachers completed the survey (an average of 6 primary teachers per RTA school).

RTA Teacher Records

All RTA teachers documented each student served by RTA and the dates in which each student was served. These records were submitted to KDE in January and in May and were used in the evaluation to identify the numbers of students served at each grade level and the number of days students were served.

Survey Results

RTA Teachers: Who are they and what do they do?

Characteristics of RTA teachers. On average, RTA teachers had 17.7 years of experience (Range = 1-42). RTA teachers also provided information about their years of experience teaching RTA at different grade levels. They reported approximately 3.8 years of experience teaching RTA at the kindergarten level, 4.7 years teaching RTA at the first grade level, 4.4 years teaching RTA at the second grade level and 4 years teaching RTA at the third grade level. One hundred sixty-three teachers reported additional certification beyond initial certification. The majority of teachers (N = 294, 91.5%) reported having experience teaching primary grades with 260 teachers (80%) reporting experience as an RTA-funded teacher prior to the current year. Fifty-two RTA teachers expected the RTA teacher would change at their school for the next academic school year (2012-2013), indicating some level of expected teacher turnover.

RTA programs implemented. RTA teachers provided information about the intervention programs being utilized by grade level at their schools. The most frequently reported intervention program in kindergarten was SRA/Reading Mastery. For first grade, Reading Recovery was the most frequently reported intervention. For second grade, SRA/Reading Mastery and Early/Soar to Success were reported with equal frequency. For third-grade students, Early/Soar to Success was used most frequently (Table 2.1). Overall, more RTA teachers reported using Reading Recovery than any other intervention, by far. A description of each of the most widely-used interventions is included in Appendix C.

Table 2.1
Number and Percent of Teachers Reporting Intervention Programs by Grade

Program	K N (%)	First N (%)	Second N (%)	Third N (%)
SRA/Reading Mastery	26 (8%)	29 (9%)	43 (13%)	39 (12%)
Reading Recovery	1 (<1%)	206 (62%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Early/Soar to Success	17 (5%)	35 (11%)	43 (13%)	47 (14%)
Earobics	7 (2%)	4 (1%)	3 (1%)	3 (1%)
Fast ForWord	4 (1%)	3 (1%)	5 (2%)	5 (2%)
Scott Foresman	20 (6%)	11 (3%)	15 (5%)	16 (5%)
Early Intervention in Reading	17 (5%)	8 (2.4%)	8 (2.4%)	5 (2%)
Head Sprout	2 (<1%)	2 (<1%)	2 (<1%)	2 (<1%)
Voyager	6 (2%)	6 (2%)	6 (2%)	6 (2%)
Harcourt	6 (2%)	3 (1%)	5 (2%)	5 (2%)
Other	61 (18%)	47 (14%)	83 (25%)	69 (21%)

RTA teachers provided information on the intervention they spent the most time implementing. The majority of participants reported spending the most time on Reading Recovery (N=199, 60%), followed by Early/Soar to Success (N=30, 9%).

Number of students served. RTA teachers reported information about the number of students they worked with through the RTA program at two different points: January and May. Figure 2.1 provides information on the number of students eligible for RTA intervention, number of students served, and approximate number of students who exited. Ranges are presented in parentheses. As the figure indicates, RTA teachers worked with an average of 25 students from August to December and an average of 26 students from January through May. However, this represents fewer than half of the eligible students. It is possible that students who were eligible but did not receive RTA services did receive services through a different intervention or funding source, but this was not clear. An average of eight students per school exited RTA by January, and an average of 13 per school exited RTA by May.

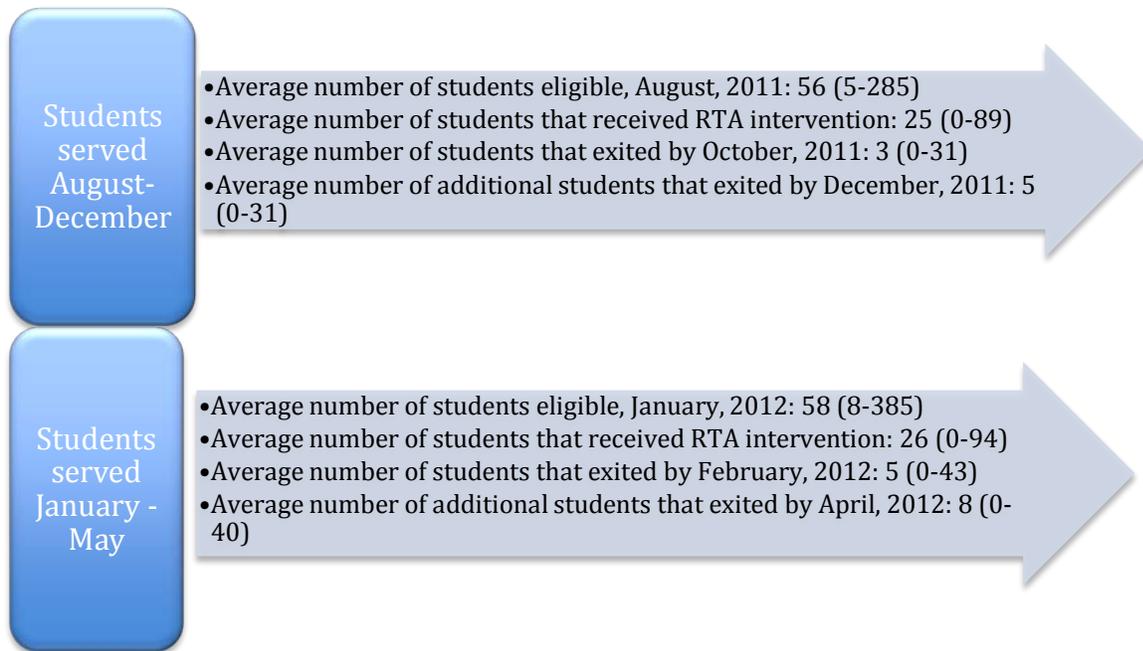


Figure 2.1. Average number of students (and range) eligible, receiving, and exiting RTA intervention by school as reported by RTA teachers.

Training for intervention. On average, teachers reported receiving 118 hours of training related to the RTA intervention (Range = 0 - 1000, Figure 2.2). When questioned about the quality of the training, the majority of teachers indicated, on average, the quality of the materials, instruction, and content of the training were excellent.

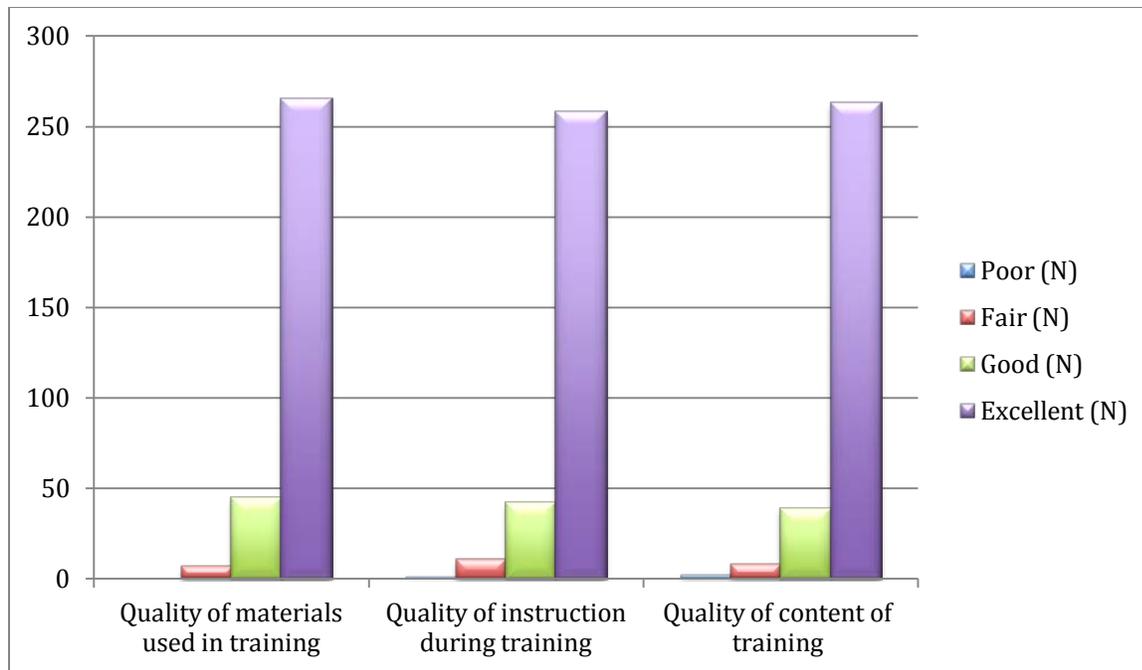


Figure 2.2. RTA teacher report of the quality of training for intervention

Comparisons were made between the intervention RTA teachers reported using and the hours of training reported (Table 2.2). RTA teachers who reported utilizing Reading Recovery reported the average highest number of training hours when compared to the other interventions ($M = 187$, $SD = 161$). Fast ForWord intervention had the second highest average hours of training ($M = 59$, $SD = 77$). Head Sprout intervention had the least amount of average hours of training ($M = 4$, $SD = 3$), preceded by Early/Soar to Success ($M = 5$, $SD = 9$).

Interestingly, there was very little variation in the report of the quality of the trainings by intervention type, with the significant majority of participants rating the quality of training as being “Good” or “Excellent.” Overall, no participants, regardless of intervention, rated the quality of materials as “Poor”, with only 2% ($N = 7$) rating the materials as “Fair.” Similarly, only one participant rated the quality of instruction as “Poor” (Early/Soar to Success Intervention), and 3% ($N = 11$) rating the quality of instruction as “Fair” (majority in Other intervention, $N = 4$). Finally, two participants rated the quality of the content of the training as “Poor” (Early/Soar to Success) with 2.4% ($N=8$) rating the quality of the content as “Fair” (majority in Other intervention, $N = 3$).

Table 2.2

RTA Teacher Report of Hours of Training by Intervention Type

Intervention	Mean Hours of Training (SD)	N of RTA Teachers
Reading Recovery	187 (161)	198
Fast ForWord	59 (77)	4
Other	31 (41)	57
SRA/Reading Mastery	24 (20)	26
Earobics	21 (n/a)	1
Harcourt	15 (18)	6
Voyager	12 (6)	7
Early Intervention in Reading	8 (9)	4
Scott Foresman	6 (9)	9
Early/Soar to Success	5 (9)	26
Head Sprout	4 (3)	2
Total	117.17	343

Ongoing professional development. The majority of RTA teachers indicated they had participated in at least one professional development/training in the last six months (92%), the most common being training in Reading Recovery (50%). Other frequently listed trainings included Comprehensive Intervention Model (18%), training in the new Common Core Standards (7%) and Response to Intervention (RtI) models (6%).

Roles and responsibilities. RTA teachers provided additional information regarding their roles and responsibilities as the RTA intervention teacher for their school as well as additional activities or duties they perform at their school (Table 2.3). RTA teachers reported spending approximately 5.26 hours of the school day delivering intensive RTA intervention services to students. On average, they reported spending approximately 84% of their day delivering RTA intervention. RTA teachers indicated that on average, they perform two (Range = 0-5) additional duties at their school, the most frequent being bus duty (N=209), followed by hall duty (N=83, Table 2.3). A total of 193 (70%) administrators indicated that the RTA intervention teacher performed some type of additional service. Similarly, administrators reported that the most frequent additional duty performed by the RTA intervention teacher was bus duty (N = 115) followed by hall duty (N=72).

Table 2.3

RTA Teacher and Administrator Report of Additional Roles and Responsibilities

Additional Role	RTA Teacher Report N (%)	Administrator Report (N)
Bus Duty	209 (61%)	115 (41.5%)
Lunch Duty	33 (9.6%)	18 (6.4%)
Hall Duty	83 (24.2%)	45 (16%)
Substitute Teacher	18 (5.2%)	3 (1%)
Office Duties	6 (1.7%)	1 (<1%)
Assistance during testing	201 (58.6%)	*

*Not asked in administrator survey.

Collaboration with classroom teachers. RTA and classroom teachers were asked about their level of communication and collaboration. Table 2.4 presents responses for both groups. The majority of classroom teachers indicated they communicate with the RTA teacher about RTA students at least once each week (65%). The majority of RTA teachers (69%) indicated they communicate with classroom teachers about RTA students with the similar frequency. This finding suggests regular communication about RTA students is occurring between RTA and classroom teachers in most schools. However, it is important to note that 16% of classroom teachers indicated they never or rarely communicate or collaborate with the RTA teacher. Interestingly, RTA teachers were more likely to identify specific areas on which they collaborate or communicate with classroom teachers, whereas classroom teachers were less likely to identify specific areas for communication or collaboration. Most frequent areas of collaboration were: identifying students for intervention, monitoring student progress, and sharing instructional strategies (Figure 2.3). RTA and classroom teachers collaborate less frequently around selecting materials and planning for instruction. RTA and classroom teachers gave conflicting reports of their collaboration around releasing students from RTA. Whereas 91% of RTA teachers reported collaborating about this, just 51% of classroom teachers reported collaborating around release decisions.

Table 2.4
Communication and Collaboration with RTA teachers

Item	Classroom Teacher N (%)	RTA Teacher N (%)
Frequency of communication regarding RTA student		
Never	85 (6%)	0 (0%)
2-3 times a year	139 (10%)	1 (<1%)
Once a month	268 (19%)	37 (12%)
Once a week	551 (39%)	194 (61%)
Daily	367 (26%)	85 (8%)
Frequency of adjusting classroom instruction for RTA students based on communication with RTA teacher		
Never	145 (10%)	6 (2%)
2-3 times a year	303 (22%)	61 (19%)
Once a month	393 (28%)	119 (38%)
Once a week	343 (25%)	100 (32%)
Daily	204 (15%)	31 (10%)
Frequency RTA instructor (or RTA intervention teacher) adjusts their classroom instruction based on communication with classroom teacher		
Never	83 (6%)	2 (<1%)
2-3 times a year	179 (13%)	66 (21%)
Once a month	219 (16%)	88 (28%)
Once a week	202 (15%)	71 (22%)
Daily	138 (10%)	13 (4%)
I don't know	571 (41%)	77 (24%)

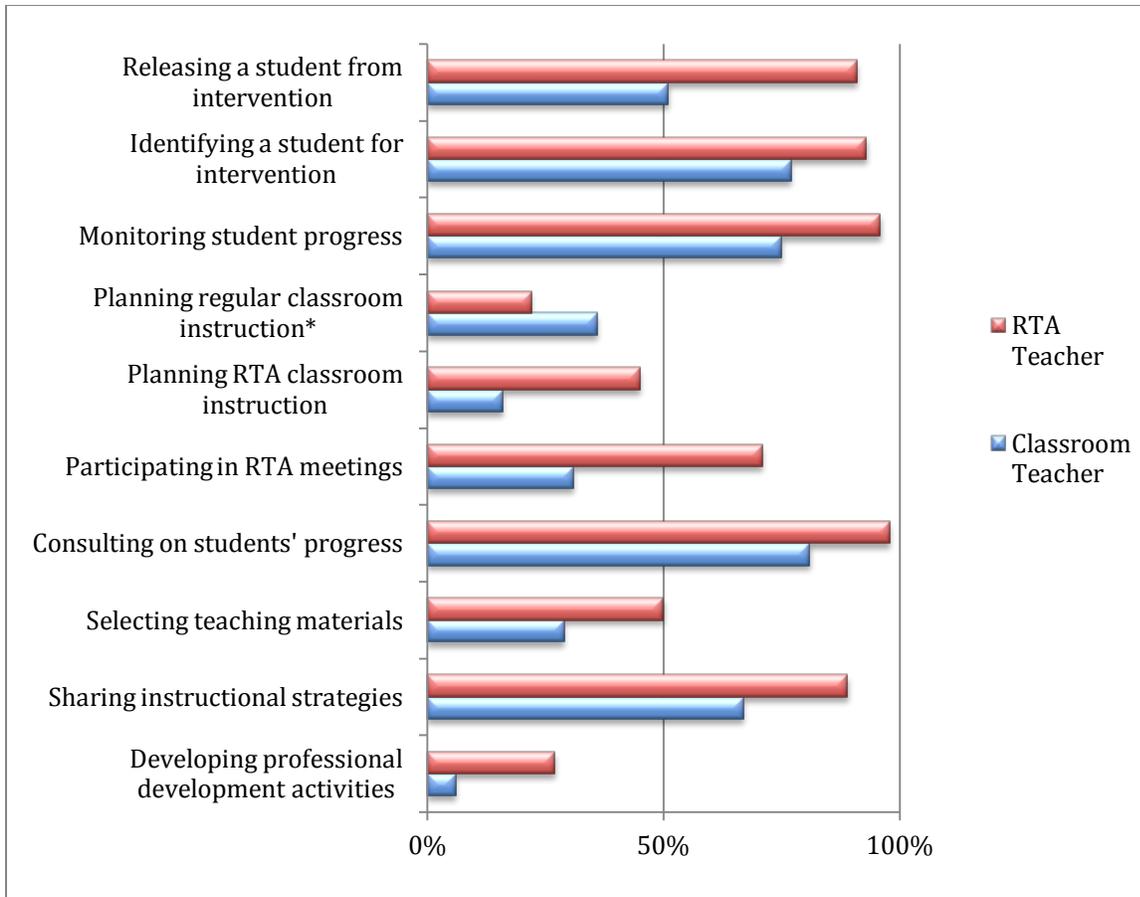


Figure 2.3. Percentage of RTA and Classroom teachers reporting collaboration regarding RTA students.

Leadership activities. RTA teachers provided information about the type of activities they are involved in at their school. The majority of RTA teachers indicated being an RtI team member (82%), followed by literacy leadership team member (48%). On average, RTA teachers indicated participating in two leadership activities (Range = 0-6). These results indicate RTA teachers are not only providing direct services to students but also are serving in literacy leadership roles in their buildings (Figure 2.4).

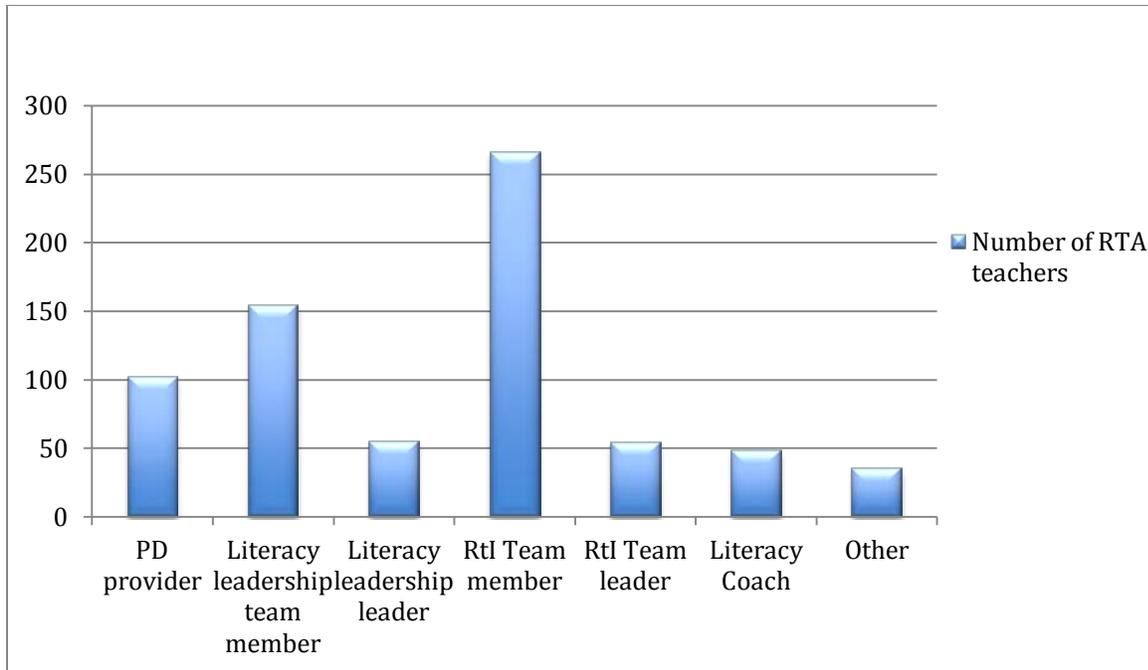


Figure 2.4. RTA teachers’ report of leadership activities at their school.

RTA Students: What are their experiences?

Number of RTA students served. In January and May, all RTA teachers at the 322 RTA schools provided KDE with reports of which students were served and the days in which those students received RTA services in the fall and in the spring. In total, these reports indicated 12,446 students received RTA services during an average of 65.4 days. The following tables summarize the number of students receiving RTA interventions and the average number of days attended by grade level for students who received intervention in either the fall or the spring or in both fall and spring. First-grade students were served most often and for the greatest number of days. Table 2.5 shows data for students teachers reported serving in either the fall or the spring. Table 2.6 shows the data for students teachers reported serving in both the fall and spring.

Table 2.5

Number of Students and Average Number of Days by Grade Level Receiving an RTA Intervention in Fall or Spring

	Fall 2011 N Receiving an RTA Intervention	Fall 2011 Average Number of Intervention Days	Spring 2012 N Receiving an RTA Intervention	Spring 2012 Average Number of Intervention Days
Kindergarten	1696	39.4	1773	39.1
Grade 1	3211	45.3	3662	57.5
Grade 2	2109	44.2	2242	41.8
Grade 3	1594	43.8	1464	42.2
Grade 4	23	54.1	24	49.0
Grade 5	1	16.0	7	47.9
Missing	36	*	38	
Total Sum	8771	377,388	9211	436,861

Table 2.6

Number of Students and Average Number of Days by Grade Level Receiving an RTA Intervention in Fall and Spring

	Total N Receiving an RTA Intervention in Fall and Spring	2011-2012 Average Number of Intervention Days
Kindergarten	1018	82.8
Grade 1	2029	120.5
Grade 2	1414	91.0
Grade 3	985	92.3
Grade 4	14	101.3
Grade 5	1	52.0
Total Sum	5536	549,822

Selection process. Based on information provided by RTA teachers, the significant majority of schools use multiple sources of data to select students to participate in the RTA intervention. These sources of data included: teacher report and referral, observations, results of standardized assessments, and classroom performance. Schools varied in the specific criteria utilized to determine qualification and these criteria depended on various factors including school context, needs of the student, etc. Over one-half of all schools used the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment as part of their RTA selection process (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7
Assessment Measures Utilized in RTA Student Selection

Assessment	N (%)
MAP	171 (54%)
DRA	51 (16%)
STAR	34 (11%)
Discovery Ed	32 (11%)
GRADE	31 (10%)
DIBELS	30 (9%)
AIMSweb	28 (9%)
Fountas & Pinnell	28 (9%)

Intensity and duration of interventions. According to the KDE website, RTA teachers should begin working with students in interventions no later than the second week of school (<http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Read+To+Achieve/FAQ/>). The majority of RTA teachers began their RTA program within the first one to two weeks of the school year (62%), followed by the third week of school (31%). Seven percent of RTA teachers reported beginning the RTA intervention at the fourth week or later of the school year.

RTA teachers most frequently reported that their students spent an average of 15-19 weeks in the RTA intervention (35%), followed by 20-24 weeks (21%, Figure 2.5). Thirty-three percent of RTA teachers indicated that students spent more than 24 weeks in the RTA intervention, with fewer than 2% reporting students spent less than 10 weeks in the intervention.

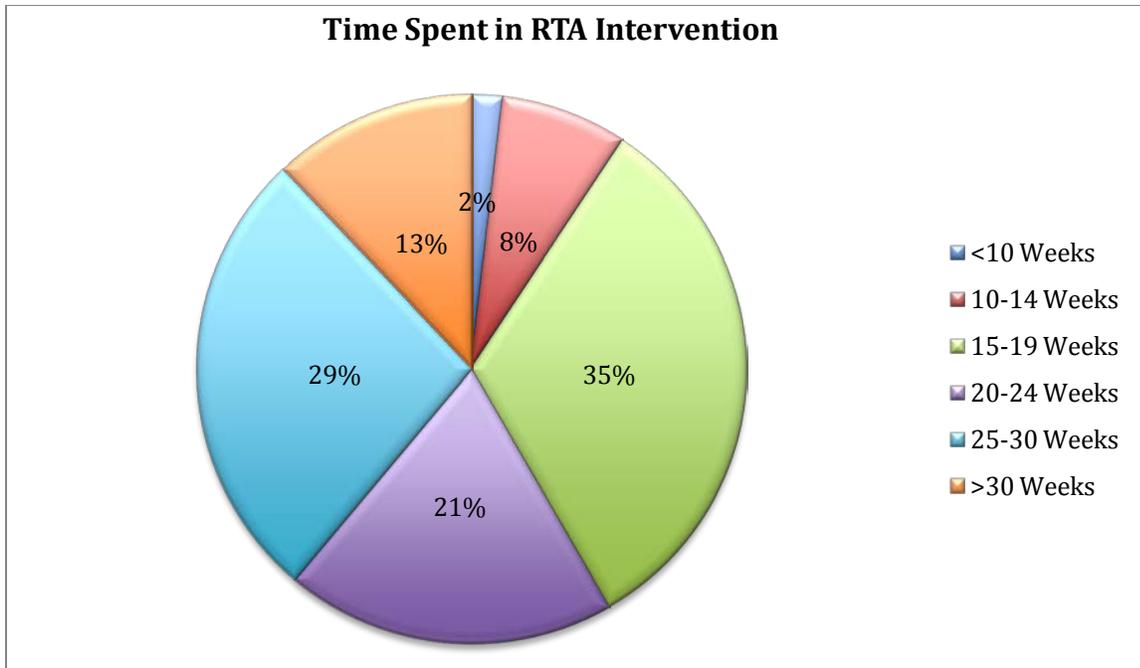


Figure 2.5. RTA teachers’ report of RTA students’ time spent in RTA intervention

Educators’ Perceptions of RTA

Perception of RTA programs’ effectiveness. Prior evaluations of RTA have assessed RTA teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of RTA programs and found that the majority of RTA teachers believe the RTA intervention is either highly effective or effective, with only 3% of respondents indicating that it was not effective (MGT of America, Inc, 2011). The current evaluation sought to expand on this knowledge by inquiring about classroom teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions of RTA programs’ effectiveness. The vast majority of classroom teachers surveyed indicated they believe the RTA program at their grade level is at least somewhat effective with most reporting the program is very effective (Table 2.8). When asked about why the program is effective, the majority of teachers who rated their school’s program as effective indicated the program meets multiple students’ needs (83%), followed by intervention students are reading better in my class (79%) and intervention students show increased confidence in my class (77%). When asked why the intervention program is ineffective, teachers who rated their program as ineffective indicated this was most frequently due to intervention students not progressing in reading (38%), followed by meeting few students’ needs (34%).

Table 2.8

Classroom Teacher Perception of Effectiveness of RTA Intervention

Survey Item	N	Percentage
How would you rate the effectiveness of the RTA intervention(s) implemented at your grade level?		
Very Effective	980	71%
Somewhat Effective	312	23%
Somewhat Ineffective	43	3%
Very Ineffective	47	3%
If the RTA intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:		
Meets multiple students needs	1,048	89%
Student materials are interesting	420	33%
Intervention students are reading better in my class	988	79%
Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction	796	63%
Intervention students show increased confidence in my class	965	77%
Intervention students show increased positive attitude in my class	764	61%
Approach is consistent with my teaching	631	50%
Other	36	3%
If the RTA intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:		
Meets few students' needs	25	34%
Student materials are lacking	6	8%
Intervention students are not progressing in reading	28	38%
Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction	11	15%
Intervention students' confidence has not improved	17	23%
Intervention students' attitude has not improved	16	22%
Approach is inconsistent with my teaching	5	7%
Other	35	47%
Not available at my grade level	9	12%
No students in my classroom served by RTA	7	9%
RTA teacher does not pull designated students consistently	4	5%
No collaboration or classroom support from RTA teacher	3	4%
RTA program does not serve enough students	2	3%

Administrators rated the effectiveness of RTA at each grade level by responding to the following survey question: "How would you rate the effectiveness of the RTA intervention(s) implemented at your school in general?" For each grade level, the majority of administrators (i.e., 50% or more) rated the effectiveness of the RTA intervention as

“very effective” with the first grade RTA intervention having the highest percentage of “very effective” ratings (81%; Figure 2.6). Overall, at least 73% of administrators rated the RTA intervention at their school as being either “somewhat effective” or “very effective”. These results suggest administrators at RTA schools generally are satisfied with the effectiveness of the RTA interventions implemented at their schools, particularly those interventions at the first-grade level. It is worthwhile to note, however, that a few administrators indicated they believed their school’s RTA intervention was ineffective.

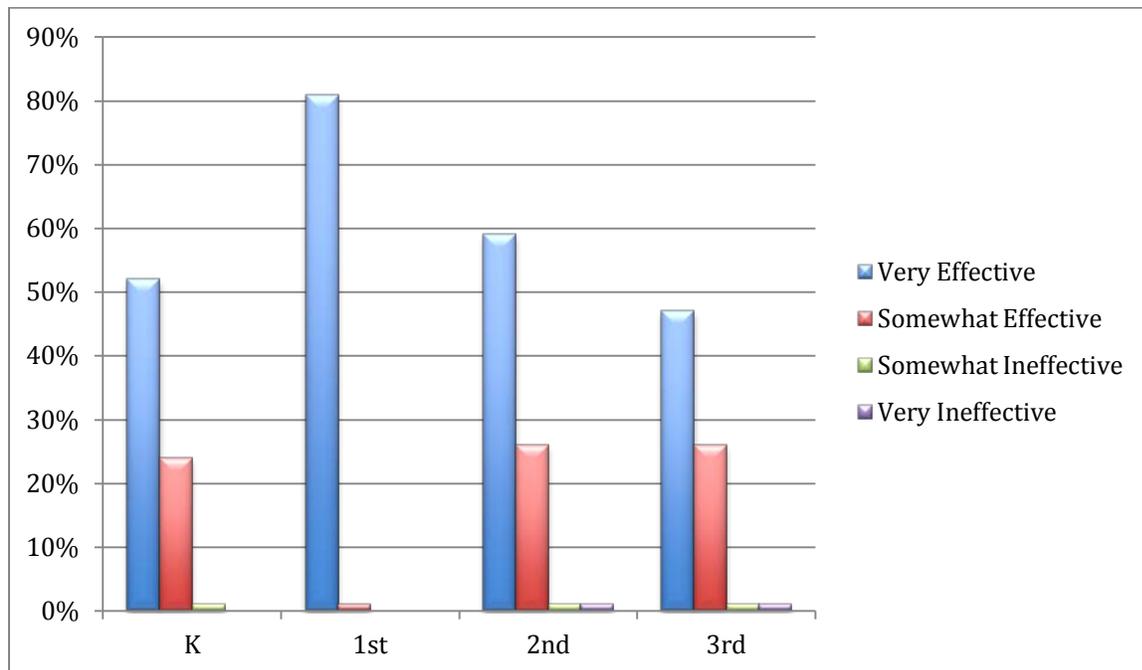


Figure 2.6. Administrators’ perceptions of the effectiveness of their school’s RTA intervention program by grade level. For some administrators, this item was not applicable because they did not have an RTA intervention program at that grade level; therefore, the totals may not equal 100%.

RTA in Schools’ Systems of Interventions

The Kentucky Department of Education charges schools with implementing a Response to Intervention (RtI) process as part of a larger system of interventions for students (KDE, 2008). RtI “integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RtI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student’s responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities” (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). One aim of the current evaluation is to assess the ways in which RTA fits into and supports schools’ RtI systems. Although this is addressed more completely in the next chapter, survey responses

did give some insight into schools' wider systems of intervention and how school personnel work as a team to make decisions about students.

RTA teams. KDE's website states, "The expectation is that no one person is solely responsible for implementation of the RTA grant but that it be shared." (<http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Read+To+Achieve/Resources/Information+for+New+RTA+Staff.htm>). Table 2.9 shows information related to RTA teams' make-up and activities. According to administrators, RTA teams consisted of the RTA teacher, a data coordinator, primary level classroom teachers, a principal or other administrator, and sometimes a counselor or special education teacher. Less frequently listed members included parents, a specialist, interventionist, school psychologists, and curriculum coaches. RTA team activities most frequently consisted of reviewing individual student progress (95%), analyzing student data (93%), and developing and reviewing student selection and exit criteria (86%). Sixty-one percent of administrators indicated the RTA team at their school meets at least monthly. The majority of administrators indicated that their RTA team meets monthly (45%) or 1-2 times a year (18%), whereas 19% of administrators indicated the RTA teams in their buildings were less active.

Table 2.9

RTA Team Membership, Activities, and Meetings

Survey Question	Administrator Response N (%)
Team Membership	
RTA funded teacher(s)	230 (96%)
Data Coordinator	138 (58%)
Primary level classroom teacher(s)	204 (85%)
Principal or other administrator(s)	206 (86%)
Counselor	97 (41%)
Special Education Teacher	104 (44%)
Parent	58 (24%)
Other	
Curriculum Coach/Specialist	8 (3%)
Team Activities	
Develop and review student selection and exit criteria	203 (86%)
Review individual student progress	225 (95%)
Analyze student data	221 (93%)
Plan professional development	103 (43%)
Support parent involvement	161 (68%)
Other	9 (4%)
Frequency of Team Meetings	
Weekly	37 (16%)
Monthly	106 (45%)
1-2 times/year	43 (18%)
Never	2 (1%)
Other	49 (21%)

RTA involvement. Classroom teachers and school administrators at RTA schools provided survey data regarding their own involvement in decision making related to RTA. Administrators appear to be most frequently involved in the RTA intervention program by observing (89%) or evaluating the RTA teacher (80%; Table 2.10). Approximately 65% of administrators reported being involved in assisting in making decisions about individual students' entry/exit in the RTA intervention program and 61% indicated they participate in

RTA team meetings. Classroom teachers most frequently reported that they collaborated in making decisions about individual student selection for the RTA intervention program (65%) as well as received assistance from the RTA teacher (55%; Table 2.10).

Table 2.10

RTA Intervention Involvement

Survey Question	Administrator Response N (%)	Classroom Teacher Response N (%)
Assisted in selecting teacher materials	86 (36%)	155 (12%)
Evaluated RTA teacher (either formal or informal)	188 (36%)	--
Observation of RTA teacher	211 (89%)	161 (12%)
Assisted in planning RTA instruction	71 (30%)	435 (33%)*
Assisted in making decisions about individual students' entry/exit in the RTA intervention program	154 (65%)	865 (65%)*
Participated in RTA team meetings	143 (61%)	445 (33%)
Assisted in developing and/or providing professional development for the RTA intervention program	103 (44%)	67 (5%)*
Participated in professional development conducted by the RTA teacher	75 (32%)	285 (21%)
Received assistance from RTA teacher	--	735 (55%)
Other	16 (7%)	99 (7%)

*Wording in classroom teacher survey differed slightly from the administrator survey (stated "collaborated" instead of "assisted")

Differentiated classroom instruction (Tier 1). Classroom teachers provided information regarding what they do for struggling readers in their classroom by responding to the following survey question: "When a student in your class is having reading difficulties, what do you do? Please check all that apply." When students struggle, classroom teachers most frequently report seeking help from the RTA teacher/specialist (79%), providing more reading instruction time (78%), more frequent progress

monitoring/assessment (77%), and consulting with other teachers (67%). They were less likely to report assigning different texts for students to read (22%, Figure 2.7).

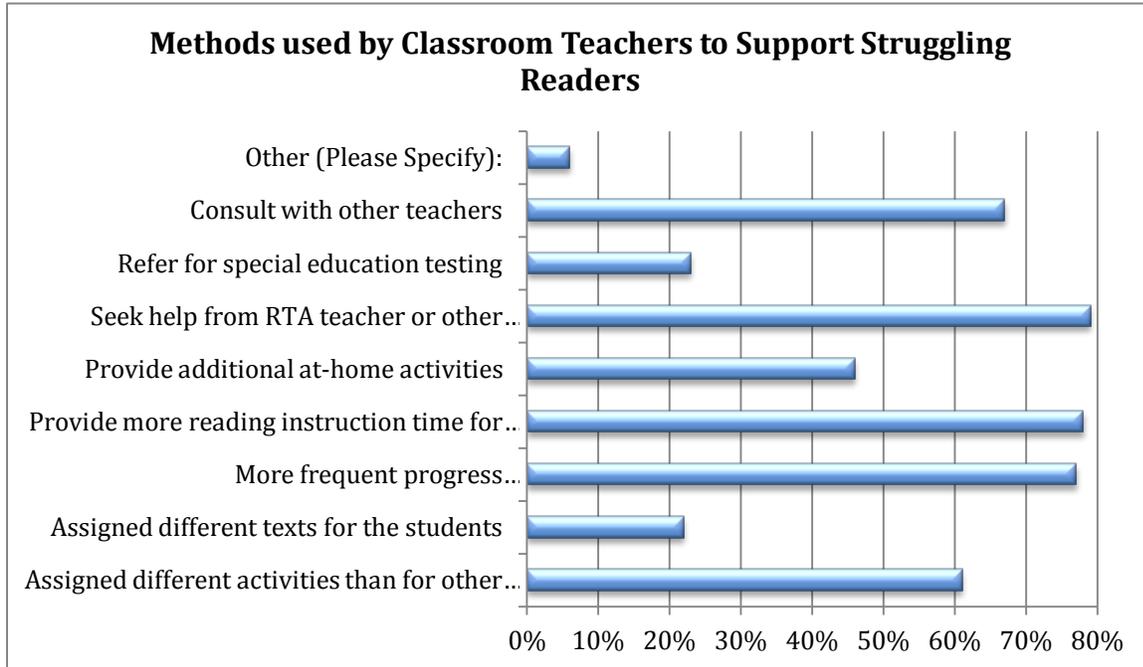


Figure 2.7. Percentage of classroom teachers reporting supports for struggling readers.

Responsibility for RTA students. To gain insight into the beliefs of school personnel about their responsibility for serving low-achieving readers RTA teachers, administrators, and classroom teachers were asked to provide a response to the following question: “Please rank who is primarily responsible for the reading achievement of the RTA students in your school, with 1 being the most responsible and 5 being the least responsible.” Interestingly, all three stakeholder groups ranked the classroom teacher as being the most responsible for reading achievement of students, followed by the intervention teachers and students themselves (Table 2.11) with administrators ranked as being the least responsible (57.4%). It is noteworthy, also, that both teacher groups ranked administrators as least responsible for reading achievement, even below parents. Conversely, administrators ranked themselves as more responsible for student achievement than parents. These data suggest educators in RTA schools perceive classroom teachers as integrally important in a school’s system of intervention, holding primary responsibility for student success.

Table 2.11

Mean Ranking for the Responsibility for the Reading Achievement of RTA students

Survey Item	RTA Teacher <i>M</i> Ranking (SD)	Classroom Teacher <i>M</i> Ranking (SD)	Administrator <i>M</i> Ranking (SD)
Classroom Teacher	1.59 (.78)	1.53 (.86)	1.69 (.91)
Intervention Teacher	1.83 (.74)	2.17 (.85)	1.98 (.88)
Students	3.14 (.98)	3.06 (1.08)	3.29 (1.11)
Parents or Guardians	4.08 (.84)	3.80 (.95)	4.18 (1.07)
Administrator	4.20 (1.15)	4.37 (1.02)	3.70 (1.32)

Summary

Data were collected from electronic surveys from RTA teachers, administrators, and primary-grade classroom teachers in RTA schools. These surveys provided information on RTA teachers and students, stakeholders' perceptions of RTA, and RTA as a support for schools' systems of interventions.

RTA teachers are experienced teachers with varied training for teaching their interventions. The majority of interventions are implemented at first grade, and the most widely used intervention is Reading Recovery. Among the most-used interventions, Reading Recovery teachers had extensive training, whereas Early/Soar to Success teachers had relatively little training. RTA teachers reported having approximately two other roles/responsibilities at their school. Further, RTA teachers have approximately two leadership roles at their school, most frequently literacy leadership team member and RtI team member. RTA teachers reported consulting/collaborating with classroom teachers regularly, but less consultation seems to occur around exiting students from RTA.

Schools use a range of criteria to identify students for RTA, including screening and progress monitoring assessments such as MAP. Typically, RTA students were in RTA intervention for a period of 15-19 weeks, although a number of students remained in an intervention for a much longer period.

Overall, it appears that the RTA intervention program is an integral part of the literacy programs at RTA schools. The significant majority of administrators and classroom teachers at RTA schools rated the RTA program at their school to be at least somewhat effective. Further, administrators and classroom teachers appear to be involved in RTA teams and decisions about student progress in RTA interventions.

Chapter 3

Case Studies of Local Implementation

This chapter provides an in-depth perspective on RTA implementation at the local level. Site visits were conducted at seven RTA schools across Kentucky. Site visits included extensive data collection from RTA teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, and parents. Classroom observations were conducted in regular classrooms and in RTA classrooms to provide insight into literacy instruction across a typical day for RTA students. Findings in this chapter are derived from interview data representing perceptions of educators in each building, parent survey data, classroom and RTA observation data, and teacher ratings of RTA students' literacy competencies. In addition, interview data are provided from five matched comparison schools that do not receive funding as part of the RTA program. These interview data from matched schools serve as context through which to interpret the added value of RTA in RTA schools and provide comparative information about how non-RTA schools serve low-achieving readers.

The first part of this chapter presents the research methods, data sources, and data collection procedures for the RTA site visits. The second part of the chapter presents findings from the case study school site visits, and the third part of the chapter presents findings from the matched comparison school interviews. Findings focus on the following research questions:

- RTA teachers: Who are they, and what do they do?
- RTA students: What are their experiences?
- How does RTA support schools' systems of interventions?

Evaluation Methods

Selection and Description of Schools

School selection process. Eight schools were selected as case study schools. All RTA schools that administered the MAP assessment comprised the initial pool for selection (N=142). From that pool, schools were selected based on the following variables: size (small or large student population), intervention program, 2006 state reading test index (near the start of the RTA program), student demographics, and geographic location (based on five geographic regions: Eastern, Central, Northern, Louisville area and Western; Figure 3.1). At one of the eight case study schools, school personnel did not respond to scheduling requests in sufficient time to schedule a visit, so that school was eliminated from the school list leaving seven case study schools.

Table 3.1

Case Study School Demographics

School	Enrollment (Students K-5)	% Minority	% Free/ Reduced Lunch	% Disability	Geographic Region
A	461	12	55	12	Central
B	474	31	55	19	Louisville
C	346	6	63	19	Western
D	368	4	39	17	Northern
E	512	9	48	11	Central
F	137	0	81	14	Eastern
G	665	33	47	17	Louisville

Table 3.2

Case Study Schools' Intervention Programs by Grade Level.

School	Kindergarten	First grade	Second grade	Third grade
A	--	Reading Recovery	Early Literacy/Guided Reading Groups	Early Literacy/Guided Reading Groups
B	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)*	Reading Recovery/ Small Literacy Groups (CIM)	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)
C	--	Reading Recovery	--	--
D	Voyager	Voyager	Voyager	Voyager
E	Leveled Literacy Instruction (CIM)	Reading Recovery	Leveled Literacy Instruction (CIM)	Leveled Literacy Instruction (CIM)
F	--	SRA Reading Mastery/Reading Recovery	SRA Reading Mastery	SRA Reading Mastery
G	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)	Reading Recovery/ Small Literacy Groups (CIM)	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)	Small Literacy Groups (CIM)

*Note: CIM stands for Comprehensive Intervention Model. After the onset of RTA, CIM was adopted as a framework for interventions including Reading Recovery and small groups taught by Reading Recovery teachers.

Overview of matched schools. Three hundred sixty-two elementary schools in Kentucky use the MAP assessment and do not receive an RTA grant. Evaluators compiled demographic data on the 362 schools and selected matched schools based on total

enrollment, percent ethnicity, percent free/reduced lunch, percent disability, and average state achievement scores from 2006. For each case study school, three schools were selected as possible matched schools. Evaluators contacted schools to get permission to access MAP scores, and interview administrators regarding the intervention program at the school. Five schools agreed to participate in the matched school component of the study. Matched school characteristics are shown in Table 3.3. Schools ranged in size from 250-432. Two schools had higher numbers of minority students, and the other three had very low numbers. All schools had at least 50% students on free and reduced lunch, with the maximum at 82%.

Table 3.3

Matched School Demographics

School	Enrollment (Students K-5)	% Minority	% Free and Reduced Lunch	% Disability
H	384	34	73	11
I	344	4	74	16
J	399	4	63	14
K	250	4	51	10
L	432	43	82	12

Data Sources, Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

An evaluation team visited each case study school for one to three days to conduct interviews with classroom teachers, RTA teachers, and administrators. Evaluators also observed literacy instruction in both regular classrooms and RTA intervention settings. Parent surveys were sent home with each RTA student.

Interviews. Evaluators used a structured interview protocol (see Appendix D) to conduct 30 minute interviews with administrators, RTA teachers, and classroom teachers. Those interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Evaluators read through all interviews and used them to construct a case study school profile for each school. Cross-case analysis was then used to look for commonalities, differences and emergent themes among the case study schools.

RTA and regular classroom observations. To provide insight into RTA students' reading instruction and experiences, a subset of RTA students at the case study schools were observed in their regular classroom and RTA settings. One RTA student from each second or third grade class was observed throughout their entire literacy block and during

their RTA session. A total of 21 students were observed. Some students were observed more than once (once during literacy block and once during RTA session) with a total of 44 observations conducted. Two students had three observations total due to scheduling complications. Students received instruction in the literacy block for an average of 106 minutes (SD = 52, Range = 20-200). The RTA intervention was provided for an average 36 minutes (SD = 5.5, Range = 30-50).

Codes were adapted from *The CIERA School Change Classroom Observation Scheme* (Taylor & Pearson, 2000) and centered on seven primary areas: who (instructor), grouping, major focus, activity, material, teacher interaction, and expected pupil response. A complete list and brief description of the observation codes is provided in Appendix E. Observers could code multiple instructors, grouping type, focus, etc., for a five-minute observation period and were instructed to code the most salient features during that five-minute period. Throughout the observation, field notes were continuously taken to coincide with and guide the classroom observation codes. Information regarding field observer training and interrater reliability is described in Appendix F. The results of all observations (i.e., RTA classrooms and regular literacy classrooms combined) is provided in Appendix G. Comparisons were made between the whole sample, RTA classrooms, and regular literacy classrooms (see Appendix H).

Parent surveys. Evaluators created a short survey for parents to complete regarding their perceptions of the RTA program (see Appendix I). The survey items were presented on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 = strongly disagree, and 4 = strongly agree. A sample item was "I have observed an improvement in my child's ability to read independently this year." Space was included for any comments parents wanted to include regarding an item. During the site visit, evaluators left sealed envelopes with the RTA teacher to be sent home with all RTA students at the school. The envelope contained a letter explaining the study, the survey itself, and an addressed, stamped envelope for the parents to mail the survey directly to the evaluators. Some parents needed surveys in a language other than English (i.e. Spanish), and those surveys and letters were provided in that language. Forty-five completed surveys were returned and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Classroom teacher ratings of RTA students' proficiencies. Teachers completed a survey designed to assess student progress (Appendix J) for those students in the case study schools whose parents provided consent (N = 48). Results from these surveys provide insight into classroom teachers' perceptions about RTA students' literacy abilities in terms of their areas of greatest and least difficulty. Surveys were adapted from a pre-existing publicly available national study (the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, U.S. Department of Education, 2001) using the Common Core Standards for second and third grade reading and writing.

Holistic ratings. One aim of the evaluation was to discern the ways in which RTA supported schools' systems of interventions. Using recommendations provided by the Institute for Educational Sciences (2009) regarding Response to Intervention (RtI), evaluators created a holistic scoring rubric to rate the level and quality of RtI implementation in case study schools (see Appendix K). Once the site visit at each case study school was concluded, the evaluation team worked together to score the school's implementation using the rubric. Holistic scores were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Site Visit Findings

Findings from the case study site visits are organized in similar ways as findings from Chapter 2, which focused on statewide implementation. The case study site visits provided an opportunity to explore the implementation questions at a deeper level and to triangulate findings from the statewide survey.

RTA Teachers: Who are they and what do they do?

Characteristics of RTA teachers. Each case study school had one RTA teacher. The seven RTA teachers were experienced teachers overall, with a mean of 18.6 years experience (Range = 8 to 33 years). Their average experience as RTA teachers was 3.7 years (Range = 1 to 6). Six of the RTA teachers held a Rank II certification (master's degree or 30 hours above a bachelor's degree), and one held a Rank I (30 hours above a master's degree). All seven teachers were female, and all were European American.

Training and professional development. All seven RTA teachers reported receiving training to teach the RTA intervention, but training varied from as little as six hours in the summer with monthly follow-up sessions, to a teacher who had received 180 hours and six hours of graduate credit. Overall, teachers reported an average of 123.9 hours of training to teach the intervention (Range = 12 to 414). Training was conducted both at the local schools and through universities. Two teachers reported receiving further training by their predecessor. All teachers reported continued professional development during the school year, ranging from twice a year to monthly. Those teachers that were trained in Reading Recovery received the most training. They tended to report getting six hours graduate credit with monthly follow-up training. The teacher who used Voyager had six hours training in the summer and also received training from her predecessor. Those using Leveled Literacy Instruction reported having monthly follow-up training. Teachers teaching Comprehensive Intervention Model small groups (CIM) generally reported training in the summer and monthly follow ups, although one teacher teaching CIM said that she was teaching herself to use it from online materials.

Roles and responsibilities. All teachers reported spending the majority of the day working with students. They tended to provide daily instruction for students for

approximately 30 minutes per lesson. An exception was seen at one school in which second-grade students received one hour of RTA instruction daily. Two of the teachers spent part of everyday attending the literacy block in the regular classroom and worked with their students during that time. Teachers worked with approximately 21 students on average (Range = 4 to 46). In four schools, the RTA teachers worked with first and second graders only. In two schools, first, second and third grades were served, and in one school kindergarten through third grade was served. In schools with Reading Recovery, first-grade students were served one-on-one, and in all other settings students were seen in small groups of two to four members.

Collaboration with classroom teachers. The degree to which the RTA teachers collaborated with classroom teachers varied widely. In terms of students entering and exiting the RTA program, all schools reported that classroom teacher input was part of the process. Collaboration around instruction was far more varied. Two of the RTA teachers spent time everyday in the literacy block with their students during classroom instruction. The intervention at those schools was CIM/Leveled Literacy Instruction at one, and was SRA Reading Mastery at the other. One RTA teacher teaches with the classroom teacher, and then follows up on skills during the pull-out RTA instruction. One classroom teacher mentioned that she and the RTA teacher use the same program – they just use different parts. Another classroom teacher said that she communicates with the RTA teacher daily and frequently sends work the RTA student struggled on in class to be worked on in the RTA class. Two of the schools appeared to have very little collaboration between the RTA teacher and the classroom teachers. The only communication mentioned was around monitoring students.

Leadership roles and other duties. In addition to working with students, all RTA teachers reported serving on the school literacy leadership team or on the RtI team. One teacher provided professional development to other teachers in her school and also serves formally as the literacy leader. As was indicated in the statewide implementation survey, most teachers reported spending a minimal amount of time on other duties (such as hall duty), and five of the seven reported that they assist with providing accommodations during the spring state testing.

RTA Students: What are their experiences?

Student selection process for RTA. All seven of the case study schools reported using testing data to select students for Read to Achieve services. The most widely used tests were MAP and DIBELS. Other assessments were DRA, Fountas and Pinnell, T-Pro and AimsWeb. In five of the seven schools, classroom teachers were consulted or made recommendations for placing students. At one school, the principal selected students based on test scores.

Time in the intervention. In contrast to the statewide survey in which the majority of teachers reported the length of intervention as fewer than 24 weeks, case study RTA teachers reported that students largely stayed in the intervention for the entire year. An exception was in Reading Recovery at the first-grade level. Students in Reading Recovery were assessed after 22 weeks and were referred for special education services if they were still reading below benchmarks. The intervention classes lasted a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 60 minutes and mostly met every day. In one school, students met for 30 minutes four days per week. Typically, students missed part of their literacy block to attend the intervention, although at one school they missed Social Studies and/or Science. At one school, students had their RTA intervention during a block of the day labeled “support block”, which was in addition to regular academic instruction.

Exiting process. Only three RTA teachers were able to clearly articulate how students exit the program. Exiting depended on students’ test scores at those schools. In one school, classroom teacher and parent input were considered. Two schools mentioned using progress monitoring in their considerations for exiting students.

Instruction for RTA Upper Primary Students

Observations of RTA instruction. To document the instruction provided to low-achieving readers participating in RTA, the observations were analyzed by the proportion of time spent at the seven different levels of coding. This was completed by calculating the percentage of time during the total observation allotted to a certain instructor, activity, focus, etc. (Figure 3.2). Based on the results of this analysis, several themes emerged by level:

- **Who:** The majority of the RTA time, students observed received RTA instruction from a specialist or reading interventionists (78%), with approximately 16% of the time from a teacher’s aide. The remainder of RTA students observed received RTA instruction from a classroom teacher (6%).
- **Grouping:** The majority of RTA instruction occurred in either small groups (92%) or individual (8%) instruction.
- **Major Focus:** During the observed RTA instruction, time centered on reading (approximately 84% of the time).
- **Activity:** Activities during RTA instruction consisted primarily of reading connected text (60% of observed time), talking about the meaning of text at a lower level of thinking or lower level of text interpretation (42% of observed time), reading comprehension (31%), listening to reading (30% of observed time), and talking about the meaning of text at a higher level of thinking (20% of observed time).

- **Materials:** Materials in RTA classrooms consisted mostly of narrative texts (58% of observed time), worksheets (23% of observed time), and board, chart, or cards (11% of observed time).
- **Teacher Interaction:** Teacher interaction styles in RTA classrooms most frequently observed included: listening to students (62% of observed time), telling or giving children information (59% of observed time), recitation or engaging students in answering questions or responding (50% of observed time), and coaching or prompting/providing support which will transfer to other situations (26% of observed time).
- **Student Response:** Student response style in RTA classroom observations consisted of a wide variety of responses from students for the majority of the observed time including: listening (59% of observed time), oral turn-taking or waiting to take turns to respond orally (42% of observed time), reading turn-taking (40% of observed time), orally responding (32% of observed time), reading (22% of observed time).

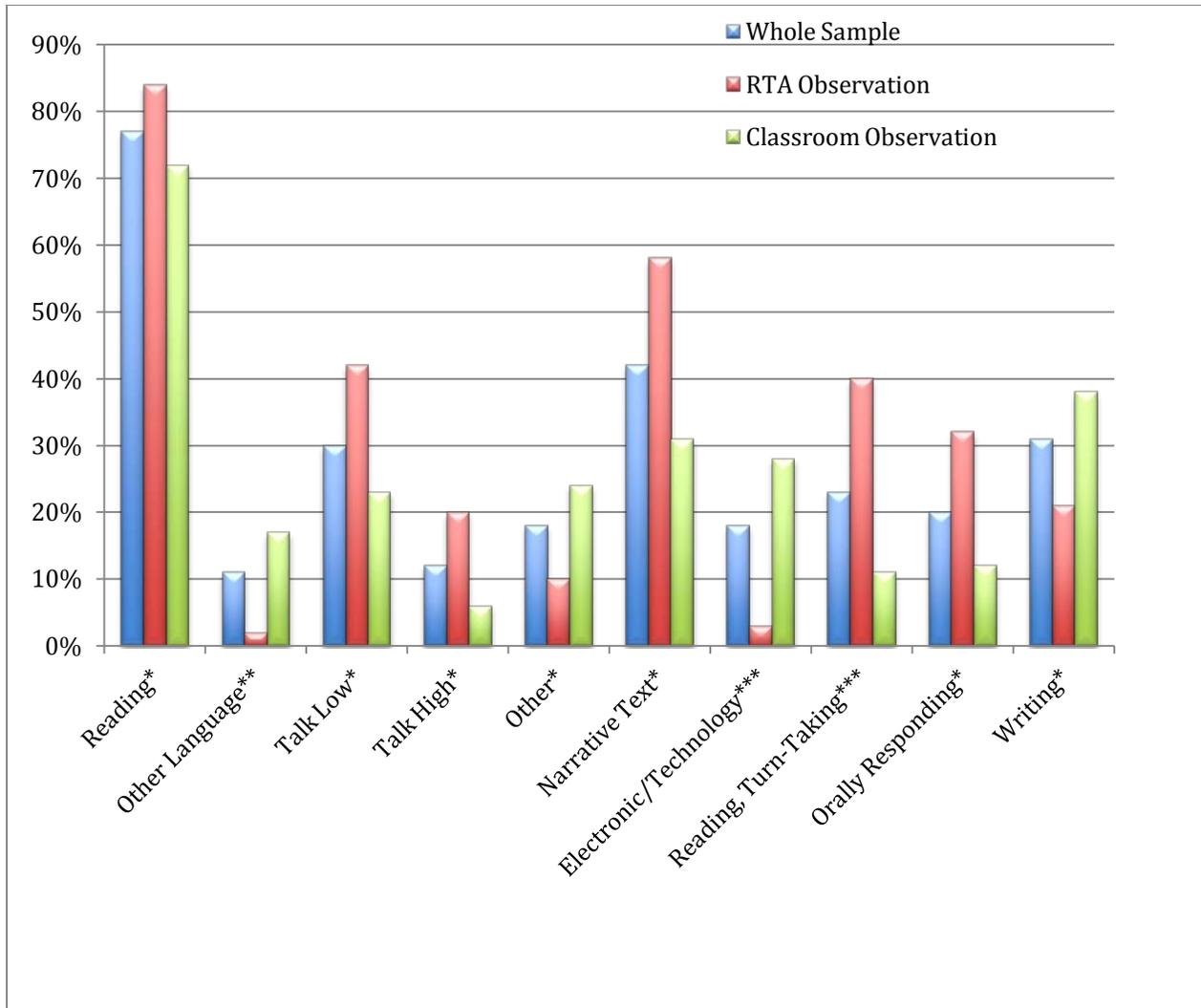


Figure 3.2. Comparisons of the significant differences in the observation codes for RTA classroom, regular literacy classroom, and the whole sample.

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Similarities and differences between RTA and classroom instruction. Table 3.4 provides a comparison of the observations of RTA instruction to observations during students’ regular literacy instruction time. Independent samples *t*-tests were completed to determine if there was a significant difference between the proportion of time in the coded activities in each setting (i.e., RTA classroom vs. regular literacy classroom). This analysis gives insight into differences in instructional focus. Of the 54 coded variables, RTA classrooms and regular literacy classrooms significantly differed in 14 areas.

Table 3.4

Significant Comparison of Observation Codes for RTA Classroom, Regular Literacy Classroom, and the Whole Sample

Observation Variable	Whole Sample <i>M</i> (SD)	RTA Teacher <i>M</i> (SD)	Classroom Teacher <i>M</i> (SD)
Who			
Classroom Teacher***	49% (48%)	6% (24%)	80% (35%)
Specialist***	43% (48%)	78% (43%)	18% (35%)
Grouping			
Whole Class***	29% (35%)	0% (n/a)	49% (32%)
Small Group***	60% (39%)	92% (14%)	37% (35%)
Focus			
Reading*	77% (19%)	84% (18%)	72% (18%)
Other Language**	11% (16%)	2% (10%)	17% (17%)
Activity			
Meaning of Text			
Talk Low*	30% (25%)	42% (26%)	23% (21%)
Talk High*	12% (15%)	20% (20%)	6% (7%)
Other*	18% (18%)	10% (9%)	24% (20%)
Material			
Narrative Text*	42% (33%)	58% (38%)	31% (24%)
Electronic/Technology***	18% (23%)	3% (11%)	28% (23%)
Student Response			
Reading, Turn-Taking***	23% (26%)	40% (29%)	11% (16%)
Orally Responding*	20% (27%)	32% (35%)	12% (14%)
Writing*	31% (28%)	21% (28%)	38% (27%)

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .00$; N/A: SD was not calculated because there was only one teacher observed at this code.

As expected, students were observed to spend a significantly larger portion of time with a reading specialist in RTA classrooms ($p < .000$), while in the regular literacy classroom students were observed to have instruction provided by a regular classroom teacher ($p < .000$). Additionally, RTA classrooms were more likely to spend a larger portion of time in small group activities ($p = .000$), with a focus on reading ($p = .05$) or an 'other' language focus (e.g., grammar, mechanics, oral expression; $p = .004$) when compared to the regular literacy classroom. More interestingly, RTA classrooms devoted a larger portion of classroom time in the following activities: engaged in talk about the meaning of text at a

lower level of thinking or lower level of text interpretation ($p = .011$), and involved in talk about the meaning of text at a higher level of thinking ($p < .00$). During students' regular literacy classroom, observations indicated a larger portion of time devoted to "other" literacy activities ($p < .000$) not included in the coding scheme. Additionally, students used electronic materials (e.g., computers, tablets, etc.) more frequently in the regular classroom than during their RTA instruction ($p < .000$). During students' RTA instruction, a significantly larger portion of time was spent using narrative text ($p = .01$) when compared to the observations in their regular literacy classroom. Students in RTA classrooms were observed to spend a significantly larger portion of time engaged in instruction either in reading turn-taking ($p < .000$), responding orally to the teacher ($p < .00$), and writing in response to teacher instruction ($p = .05$) than when observed in their regular literacy classroom.

Overall, the results from the RTA session observations indicate that RTA students are engaged in additional instruction time that is focused on reading, writing, thinking, and talking about texts. Without the addition of RTA instruction, these students would have fewer opportunities to engage in meaningful literacy activities.

Teacher Ratings for RTA Students

Teacher ratings for second graders. Teachers rated a total of 30 second graders in the seven case study schools during the spring of the 2011-2012 academic school year. Ratings were provided on several reading skills such as fluency, communication, comprehension, writing, grammar and technology. Teachers rated students on these skills on a Likert-type scale from 1 to 5 (1 = Not Yet, 2 = Beginning, 3 = In Progress, 4 = Intermediate, 5 = Proficient). Overall, teacher ratings indicate that the areas of proofing/re-reading written work, use of the computer, and composing stories/reports are weaker areas for RTA students. Additionally, it is of note that teachers did not rank any RTA students as "Proficient" in the areas assessed (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5

Teacher Rating of Second Grade Student Progress

Academic Skill	N	Max.	M	SD
Conveys ideas clearly when speaking	30	4.00	2.77	.82
Uses various strategies to gain information	30	4.00	2.40	.93
Reads fluently	30	4.00	2.47	.73
Reads second grade books (fiction) independently with comprehension	30	4.00	2.37	.72
Reads and comprehends expository text	30	4.00	2.27	.64
With guidance and support from adults and peers, composes multi-paragraph stories/reports	30	3.00	2.13	.51
Rereads and reflects on writing, making changes to clarify or elaborate	30	3.00	1.87	.63
Makes mechanical corrections when reviewing a rough draft – for example, rereads a story	30	4.00	2.17	.70
Uses the computer for a variety of purposes	28*	4.00	2.00	.67

*Teachers had incomplete rating forms for two students on this item.

Teacher ratings for third graders. A total of 18 teachers completed ratings of third grade student progress at the end of the academic year. Similar to the questions for second graders, teachers provided ratings on student progress related to communication, fluency, text level, comprehension, grammar, writing, and technology use. Areas of greater weakness for third grade RTA students based on teachers ratings included: making mechanical corrections when reviewing writing, reading and comprehending expository text, proofing written work, and composing stories/reports. Of the areas assessed, only one had teacher ratings of “Proficient” for RTA students - conveys ideas clearly when speaking (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6

Teacher Rating of Third Grade Student Progress

Academic Skill	N	Max.	M	SD
Conveys ideas clearly when speaking	17*	5.00	2.53	1.18
Uses various strategies to gain information	17*	4.00	2.59	1.12
Reads fluently	18	4.00	2.61	1.04
Reads third grade books (fiction) independently with comprehension	17*	4.00	2.76	.90
Reads and comprehends expository text	18	4.00	2.11	.76
Composes multi-paragraph stories/reports	18	4.00	2.17	.92
Rereads and reflects on writing, making changes to clarify or elaborate	18	4.00	2.17	.86
Makes mechanical corrections when reviewing a rough draft	18	4.00	1.94	.80
Uses the computer for a variety of purposes	18	4.00	2.39	.92

*Teacher had incomplete rating forms for one student on these items.

Stakeholders' Perceptions of RTA

During the site visit interviews, RTA teachers, administrators, and classroom teachers were asked about the benefits and challenges of implementing the RTA program in their schools. This section presents patterns in the data across schools and includes illustrative quotes from stakeholders.

RTA teachers' perceptions of RTA.

Benefits. RTA teachers all felt strongly that their programs are very effective. Particularly, RTA teachers emphasized the benefits of providing extra time for reading instruction for students and of working with students one-on-one or in a small group. Teachers reported great improvements in RTA students' reading abilities, comfort level, and confidence with reading. They suggested it was especially important that these reading interventions be provided for students early in their schooling, during the primary grades. The following quotations illustrate RTA teachers' perceptions about the benefits of RTA for students:

- I just think it's a great program. I see improvement every day in our students who are receiving these intervention classes. I can't imagine where our students would be without them. I really can't.

- I think Reading Recovery is probably one of the most promising interventions you can offer. I mean one-on-one intervention with specific direct instruction is exactly what these kids need. I think it's absolutely effective in meeting their needs.
- I think for the children it just lifts their self-esteem. They feel better about themselves. Books that we're able to read in small group they are able to take back and read in their class. It just makes them feel good and when they feel better they want to read. And it's nice to see them once they cross that boundary where it's really hard to it's getting easier for them and that's when those lights go on in their eyes.
- When you can put them in a small group where it's quiet and they don't feel quite as intimidated, I really feel that part is beneficial too along with all the strategies the program teaches.

When interviewers asked RTA teachers to share success stories from their RTA programs, teachers at all case study schools shared compelling stories of children who experienced success in RTA. A sample of those RTA success stories are presented here:

- I had a little boy and he's...nobody spoke English at home. I think there was maybe an older brother. And so for him it was just a lot of, "I'm going to pull out picture books. We're going to talk about...here's the playground. We're going to talk about the swing set. We're going to talk about the slide. We're going to go outside. And he's going to make a book of him going down the slide." And he made a lot of progress that year.
- We had a little girl that was home-schooled last year...or her kindergarten year and she came to first grade, and when we tested them, she was the lowest. And definitely right off the bat we were like we need to start [immediately]. We need to do all these things. So, I took her in and she was out in 15 weeks at a text level of 22.
- Well, [the student] is in one of my first grade classrooms and he is an ESL student and he has just started to shine for me. At the beginning of the year he did not want to speak because he had difficulty speaking and a little bit of difficulty understanding too. But he has grasped English and is now really performing in my first grade group. We have a family, three children, who are from Italy- spoke absolutely no English when they first came and just one of them is in the literacy group and they just now speak and read English as well as anybody in the school. So the group for both of those children is about reading but it's also about language – talking, hearing English, speaking English in a small group where you don't feel embarrassed about it.

- One of our little boys came in at a level 0, could not even read the dictated sentence that I wrote for him and he left first grade reading at level 24.

Challenges. RTA teachers articulated a number of challenges related to implementing RTA. One of the greatest challenges expressed by RTA teachers was the inability to serve all students who need services. RTA teachers suggested more teachers were needed in order to serve all struggling students. Some RTA teachers also discussed the need for more time with children in terms of a greater number of weeks to work with students. Other challenges RTA teachers mentioned included difficulty meeting students' individual needs in small groups, getting through all the material required for the program, and obtaining parental support. The following quotes from RTA teachers illustrate the teachers' perceptions about some of their challenges:

- [One challenge is] having more man power and time, time during the day, it's like a double-edged sword. You need the time to work with the children but you also need the time to be able to get together and gather data and go through the data and determine which children need it the most.
- The biggest challenges I guess are those kids that we don't reach like, I really...you know I feel like sometimes if I only had a little bit longer, even after the 20 weeks in Reading Recovery, if I just had a little bit longer with them....
- The biggest challenge is not having enough people to serve all the children that need to be served. And I know you hear that in every single school. This year we had to kind of rotate children in and out because we have more children than we had spots. So that's a huge issue because you're leaving out children that need and you can't do anything about it.
- The biggest challenge for me is working with kids who have no parental support. ... they just have no support at home....their home life is horrible.

Administrators' perceptions of RTA.

Benefits. Administrators were effusive about the benefits of RTA, referring to it in the following ways: "...as essential as the roof to the building of the school", ".....the best program the state has", "...we couldn't survive without it", "...I can't imagine how our schools would operate without it...", "...we couldn't do what we are doing, and it's profound".

In addition to these general remarks, administrators discussed specific benefits of RTA in their schools. Administrators talked about leveraging their RTA funds to train one teacher, and then have that teacher train others or provide guidance to teachers about how to address their students' reading needs. Principals mentioned RTA as a catalyst for new conversations about reading curricula and instruction. One principal in one district and one district coordinator in another district mentioned a strategy of getting a teacher trained in

the RTA intervention, then moving them back to the classroom so that they could influence a greater number of students. Other principals said the biggest benefits were “catching students while they are young” and getting them the help they need. Like RTA teachers, administrators shared many success stories about individual children who had benefited from RTA. One particularly compelling story is illustrated in the following quote:

- We have a kid that's in RTA right now that's in second grade and through the program and other things we're implementing in our school ... and now he's starting to read. His mom and dad were both in special ed and up until three months ago they said, "We were special ed. He'll be just like us." And the mother came in crying and said, "I can't believe it."

Challenges. Like RTA teachers, administrators noted that having the resources to serve all students who need intervention as the greatest challenge in implementing RTA. Even administrators who indicated their schools did serve all students in need suggested their schools did not provide sufficient services to ensure students' success. All administrators discussed the need for more funding for reading intervention. Some also discussed the challenging uncertainty about whether funding will continue from year to year. The following quotes illustrate administrators' concerns about RTA resources:

- Scheduling, resources, the intervention programs are very expensive.... It's 50-60 dollars a student just for the kit, so the fact that the grant covers the salary is fabulous, but we just keep scraping pennies to find the money to offer it.
- I think the biggest challenge is the funding, the uncertainty every year, and just wondering, you know, are we going to have the money to make sure that [the RTA teacher] gets to stay in that position, because if RTA funds are cut she'll have to go back in the classroom.
- Because of the cuts that we've experienced with RTA, around this time every year we start worrying, you know, how much money are we going to get for RTA? Are we going to be able to make up the difference?
- Our biggest challenge for us with the program is that we chose Reading Recovery as our intervention. So it is very limited on the number of students she can service through Reading Recovery.

Additionally, one principal talked about the challenge of ensuring that RTA instruction and classroom instruction are consistent philosophically:

- The schools where the classroom instruction may be way over here philosophically, and ours was way over here, so imagine that kid stays confused all the time. So what we tried to do is make our core instruction and our intervention more consistent philosophically. So we gave a little bit and they gave a little bit, that way that kid gets the same message all day.

Classroom teachers' perceptions of RTA.

Benefits. Most of the classroom teachers interviewed believed that the RTA program was very effective. They expressed appreciation for the one-on-one time students got with the RTA teacher and noted the progress they had seen students make. Some teachers indicated they saw changes in motivation and engagement for students, specifically related to students' confidence and willingness to read. Like RTA teachers and administrators, classroom teachers shared a number of compelling RTA success stories. Three examples are provided here:

- I have one little boy, which was absent today, but at the beginning I thought, "Oh my goodness. He's not in RTI?" He has been...he was retained in kindergarten. And I kept thinking, "What am I going to do?" He came from a family that his daddy does not read. His mom was a special ed student. He's very low-level, but he's reading. And his daddy is so excited because he said, "He is reading to me. He is coming home every night and reading to me." And he's just all excited, and I'm thinking we have to keep going with this because when you see a student like that, you think, "What are we going to do?" But he's reading so it's working. We can't give up because it's just too good.
- Well with the specific student that you watched today at the beginning of the year she cried every day, bless her heart, when she read and since she has gotten involved in the RTA program she volunteers to read out in class. She doesn't need any help anymore.
- [The RTA student] looks forward.... He watches that clock.... He has a clock stamp that says [RTA teacher] and a stamp for his two reading group teachers, and he will watch that clock all day. He gets up at one minute' til when he's supposed to go and he is out that door... He loves every minute of it. So I mean I just think confidence. I love his motivationHe has it where he just lights up and wants to read and that's what [RTA teacher] and I are trying to get him to do.

Challenges. From classroom teachers' perspective, scheduling was the greatest challenge in implementing RTA. All the classroom teachers talked about scheduling issues when asked specifically about challenges. Some teachers were concerned that students were pulled out during the literacy block, which meant they missed valuable classroom instruction time. In schools that prohibited scheduling RTA during the literacy or math blocks, finding enough blocks of time for students to go to RTA was difficult. The following quotes illustrate these scheduling challenges:

- The biggest challenge for me has been it's a scheduling conflict, for my class specifically because the students are pulled out of my reader's workshop in the

middle of student work time. So often times they don't get to finish whatever it is that we're working on, and they don't get reflection time.

- The biggest challenges would be I guess scheduling. Because they're not pulled out of core content classes and to find time when they're not being taught core content at this level, is such a struggle.
- For me it's the scheduling, the timing when they go out because pretty much they miss, and this was intentional on my part and most teachers will do this, the student will go out of the classroom during our science and social studies time because they have to be in during our reading time and they have to be in during our math time so by the time they get to fourth grade out of the primary program then they have missed several years and there is some gaps to fill.

Classroom teachers also noted as challenges the funding issues that were mentioned by RTA teachers and administrators. They expressed concerns about students who may not be receiving services due to limited resources. At one school, upper-primary classroom teachers did not seem to have much knowledge about their school's RTA program, and they expressed frustration or uncertainty about how their students were served. In this school, teachers were notified which of their students would receive services beginning in February. Students had been attending RTA, but classroom teachers had little or no information about the program.

Parents' perceptions of RTA. Table 3.7 presents data from parent surveys. Of the 45 surveys returned, eight were from parents of kindergarteners, 22 were from parents of first graders, twelve were from parents of second graders, and three were from parents of third graders.

Table 3.7

Survey Results of Parent Perceptions of RTA

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Read independently	1	1	17	26
Read homework	1	3	19	20
Improvement in class work	1	2	20	20
Improvement in motivation	1	4	19	20
Enjoyment of reading	1	5	20	18
Confidence in reading ability	1	3	21	19
Intervention improved reading	1	3	16	24
Intervention improved motivation	1	3	19	22
Intervention improved reading enjoyment	1	5	19	16
Classroom teacher sends home reading work for parent and child	1	6	16	20
RTA teacher send home reading work for parent and child	0	3	15	24
School provides me with info. on supporting my child's reading	0	6	20	16

Generally, parents were very positive about the intervention program their child received. Of particular note were the following positive findings: Seventy-six percent of parents reported that their school provided literacy events that they could participate in with their child; 64% reported they were involved in decisions regarding their child's reading intervention program. The majority of parents had met with their child's intervention teacher twice in the past year, and most reported that the school provides opportunities for the parents to communicate with the RTA teacher between once a week and once a month.

Parents included some comments on the surveys. They reported many successes with the intervention their child received:

- We have noticed the BIGGEST difference in [child's name] reading and are so thankful for this program.
- [Child's name] has been improving since participating in this program.
- [Child's name] has improved dramatically!
- He'd rather read than do homework
- [Child's name] has really benefited from this program and [RTA teacher's] instruction as a reading teacher.
- She now wants to read more.
- He has started to pick up a book and read it on his own.

Some parents expressed concerns about their child's experience in RTA:

- My child has always enjoyed reading. I feel that this program needs revamped! My child has the motivation. The school needs the skills to make it happen.
- I would like more information on how my child is doing and what I can do to help at home.
- My granddaughter will spend another year in second grade.
- We were never made aware of how our child was doing. We received progress reports that stated that she was on target and where she needed to be. Then in March - two months before school is out, we get a progress report that shocked us. We learned that our child was not reading at level and the teacher recommended she be held back in second grade. ...We are very frustrated with this reading program and will not allow our child to be placed back into it.

Overall however, parents reported positive perceptions about their children's RTA program and indicated they had observed positive changes in their children's reading abilities and attitudes.

RTA as Support for System of Interventions

During the site visits, evaluators sought to understand the ways in which schools structured and implemented systems for intervention and to document the ways in which RTA supported the schools' RtI system.

RTA teams. Consistent with the results of the statewide implementation survey, personnel at all case study schools reported having school teams that focused on literacy issues in their schools. However, the composition and activity levels of the teams varied widely among the case study schools. Two of the case study schools had an RTA team in place at their school. The RTA teacher, special education teachers, principal, guidance

counselor and other interventionists (i.e. Title One teacher) were usually included. One site included regular classroom teachers as well. In the other schools, literacy teams were in place, but they were called RtI teams or Literacy teams rather than RTA teams. The RtI teams had the same kinds of membership as the RTA teams. In two schools there was a literacy team. One literacy team had similar membership to the RTI and RTA teams in other schools. The other literacy team included all the RTA teachers and principals in the district, as well as the district RTA coordinator. This team met both as a large group and in smaller school-level groups as well. In one school, staff mentioned that there was an RTI team, but in interviews they couldn't identify who was on the team, and whether they had ever met. In the schools in which literacy teams were active, these leadership teams for the most part met regularly and worked to screen and identify students for RTA, and monitor their progress. Some met as little as three times per year, while others met as often as two times per month.

Other interventions in RTA schools. In addition to the RTA intervention, schools frequently had other reading interventions in place. In three of the case study schools there was a second teacher who taught the same intervention as the RTA teacher. In two of those schools, the funding for the second teacher came from the federal Title One program. In addition to their RTA interventions, schools reported using programs like Rigby Intervention by Design, Great Leaps, and the Sobrato Early Academy Literacy Model. Schools also used computerized programs like Systems 44, Read 180 and Accelerated Reader. In one school, there was a reading assistant who worked with students on computerized programs.

The RTA intervention appeared to be an integral piece of the system of interventions schools provided. School personnel mentioned using leveled readers and differentiated instruction in the regular classroom instruction (sometimes referred to as Tier 1 intervention). Usually, it appeared schools viewed their RTA program as a Tier 2 intervention. Typically, school personnel indicated students were referred to special education if they were still not reading well after participating in RTA. Although recommendations for RtI usually include more intensive interventions at the tier 3 level, prior to referral to special education (IES, 2009; KDE, 2008), most school personnel identified special education as their Tier 3 intervention.

Holistic ratings of schools' RtI systems. To provide information about schools' implementation of RtI, evaluators completed rubrics related to the various RtI components based on recommendations for RtI (IES, 2009; see Appendix K). The rubric included scoring categories ranging from 0-3, with "0" indicating the component is was not in place at all, "1" indicating inconsistent evidence that the component was in place, "2" indicating some evidence that the component is implemented inconsistently, and "3" indicating strong evidence the component is implemented consistently. Table 3.8 shows the overall mean

scores case study schools received for each component. Overall, the RTA case study schools received the highest scores for screening students, monitoring student progress, and having Tier 2 interventions, or systematic instruction for students who are not successful after regular classroom interventions. This is not surprising since most schools used RTA to fund Tier 2 interventions. Schools received lower scores for differentiating instruction in the regular classroom (Tier 1), providing intensive instruction for students who are not successful after Tier 2 (Tier 3), and parental involvement in literacy. Table 3.9 shows overall ratings for individual schools.

Table 3.8

Case study school RtI holistic scores

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation
Student screening for Intervention	2.43	.488
Differentiated Instruction in regular classrooms	2.00	.690
Systematic Instruction for students not at benchmark	2.43	.535
Ongoing monitoring of students' progress	2.86	.951
Intensive Instruction for students who do not respond to	2.00	.378
Parental Involvement in literacy activities/decisions	2.00	.535

Note: Holistic rubric included ratings of 0-3 for each component.

Table 3.9

Overall Mean Scores for Case Study Schools

School	Overall Mean Score
A	1.86
B	1.14
C	2.57
D	2.29
E	1.71
F	2.29
G	2.57

Note: Holistic rubric included ratings of 0-3 for each component.

Results from the holistic ratings indicate schools are successfully implementing some aspects of RtI, particularly screening, monitoring, and providing targeted interventions for students who are not successful with regular classroom intervention. However, the RTA case study schools face challenges in implementing other aspects of RtI. The following quote suggests one principal's commitment to RtI and illustrates some challenges:

- There are many things that we can offer here at school, but there are some things that we don't have control over, and there are some things that we can't change. And it's not for lack of effort; we really try. And we don't ever give up to say that child has poor home support, or that child just doesn't want to learn to read, or they just don't really care about learning to read. So sometimes there's a wall there, and just trying to figure out how to reach that child, and tear down that wall. But it's not easy. And some children may respond well to short-term intervention, and other children may need longer intervention, or long-term intervention. But that's why I really like the RtI process because it's not just that child is in intervention, but specifically looking at tiers of intervention or how long have they been in that intervention; are they making progress in that intervention, and if not let's change it. So just constantly looking for the right answer, because it's out there.

Findings from Comparison Non-RTA Schools

To provide a comparison that lends insight into RTA's added value for schools and students, evaluators conducted phone interviews with administrators at five schools not participating in the RTA program. These interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes. It is important to note the limitations of such minimal contact with school personnel as

compared to data collected during the case study school visits. However, the matched comparison school interviews do provide important information about how schools that do not receive funding serve low achieving readers and how they perceive RTA funding would help them serve their students.

Systems of interventions

Four of the five matched schools' administrators discussed their system of interventions. These four schools reported having a team of administrators and teachers that met regularly to review data on students, discuss screening and placement, and monitor student progress. Schools tended to focus their intervention efforts on the early primary. As one principal said, "We are concentrating [the interventionist] in the primary grades – in kindergarten, first and second, if we can, because we feel like we really need to get those kids well before they get out of second grade or else we lose them. They are just way too hard to catch up." The fifth school reported providing reading interventions for students, but did not seem to have a clear system in place. At that school, no intervention team was in place, and there was not a structured process for reviewing student data.

Each of the matched schools had intervention teachers that were either part-time or full time. One school had one part time teacher, and another had 2 full time teachers. The other three had either one full-time, or two part-time teachers. All were funded through Title One or discretionary funds. Two of the schools had participated in the federal Reading First program, which had provided funds for interventions but was discontinued.

Each of the four schools with RtI systems had leveled reading programs with differentiated instruction in the regular classroom. These schools used commercial basal reading programs such as MacMillan, Open Court, Harcourt, and Scott Foresman. All administrators reported classroom teachers utilizing small group instruction during the literacy block.

During the interviews, administrators tended not to distinguish between Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Schools mentioned using programs such as Orton Gillingham, Reading Mastery, Horizons, Leveled Literacy Instruction, Great Leaps, Fountas and Pinnell, Scott Foresman 3D Sidewalk and Early Success/Soar to Success. Schools also use computerized programs, such as Lexia, Reading Plus, Read 180, Systems 44, and SuccessMaker. Principals were complimentary about the computerized programs: "We've had a lot of success with Read 180...yes, a lot of success. Significant gains in kid's lexile scores." In at least one school, the computerized programs were used as the Tier 2, and then Reading Mastery and Horizon was used in Tier 3. Other administrators were not as clear about how various programs fit into an RtI system and tended just to discuss a list of programs in use. Interestingly, none of the schools mentioned programs that inherently require that

teachers receive extensive training, such as Reading Recovery, which were common programs in the case study schools and the larger group of RTA schools.

One administrator mentioned the need for more training and professional development for intervention teachers:

- My interventionist is qualified, I would say, but to be honest she has not received...I don't have the funds to train her in the way that I believe she truly needs to be trained.

Need for Funding

In four of the matched schools, children in need of intervention services were not being served. In two schools, principals said 40-42% of students were not being served, and in the other two schools principals said approximately half their struggling readers were not being served. Two principals indicated that at least 125 students in their buildings needed reading interventions but were not receiving them.

All five administrators would apply for RTA funding if another round opened up, although one administrator commented: "in the scheme of a day, we're busy working with kids. So when it comes to writing grants...we have to be very sparing with our time and we have to feel very strongly that we're going to be able to get what we work for because any time we spend away from kids has to be justified." When the last funding round was available, two of the schools were Reading First schools and consequently were ineligible to apply for RTA, two applied for RTA but were not funded, and one did not apply.

Generally, administrators talked about how helpful extra funding would be so that they could help more students:

- "I have so many students performing below grade level in my school...so I know I have a group of children that have a need, but I'm not addressing that need because I don't have the manpower to..."
- "We have a large number of students that need the intervention and the more time we can put with the certified person then obviously I think there is potential for benefit...our needs remain greater than we can cover."
- "It would make a difference because I would have another reading teacher....I could pick up most of those other struggling kids."

Summary

The focus of the case study component was to look more in-depth at a small number of schools to see how RTA is implemented at the local level. Interviews, observations, and teachers' ratings of student progress provided insight about RTA successes and challenges.

Interviews were conducted with administrators at matched comparison schools to lend context to the case study data.

The RTA teachers at the case study schools were teachers with many years of experience teaching in the regular classroom, but far fewer years in the RTA classroom. In some cases, administrators chose to get teachers trained then move them back to the regular classroom. This allowed the school to spread out highly trained reading teachers among faculty, and perhaps have that training impact greater numbers of students. However, it does mean that the students who are in need of RTA services don't necessarily have a teacher with much experience teaching the intervention. The training teachers receive depends largely on the intervention program the school selected. Schools that implement Reading Recovery and CIM have teachers with more training; those schools that selected other interventions tend to have teachers with less training.

During the school day, RTA teachers spend most of their time teaching students; they do not tend to have many outside duties. They also tend to be part of a team in their school that discusses reading intervention and works with data to select and monitor student progress.

Students tend to be selected for RTA based on test scores and teacher input. They received RTA instruction every day, and met with the RTA teacher in either small groups or one-on-one instruction. The RTA instruction tends to have more focused time on reading, writing, thinking and talking about texts than regular classroom instruction, indicating more intensive instruction in literacy.

A majority of stakeholders (administrators, classroom teachers, RTA teachers, and parents) perceived the RTA program in their school was very effective. The opportunity for students to have extra time immersed in reading instruction was viewed as critical for success. Some of the challenges schools face is having enough resources to provide adequate time for students as needed and to provide enough teachers to reach all the students that need assistance. Scheduling RTA is a challenge. Finding blocks of time to work with students so they do not miss other valuable instruction is difficult, and finding time for teachers to meet and review data is difficult.

The case study schools have areas of strength around their RtI programs, and areas in need of improvement. These schools scored very well on selecting students for RTA, monitoring their progress, and providing the in-depth instruction needed at the Tier 2 level. Given that RTA funding was often used for Tier 2 interventions, this isn't surprising. Case study schools needed to improve in providing differentiated instruction in regular classrooms (Tier 1), and providing more intense reading intervention help if a child is unsuccessful in Tier 2 interventions (Tier 3).

The matched school interviews gave some insight into systems at schools without RTA funding. These schools did tend to have RtI teams in place and were providing interventions to struggling readers in small group settings. However, they did not tend to select intervention programs that required large amounts of training for the intervention teacher. Comparison school administrators discussed students in need of intervention that were not being served, and discussed how “thin” resources are spread. The lack of resources makes it challenging to meet the requirements of RtI, and to meet the needs of their students.

Chapter 4

Student Achievement

This chapter focuses on the achievement of students who have participated in reading interventions funded through RTA. The purpose for the data analyses presented in this chapter is to understand the reading achievement of students who had received RTA intervention whether RTA students maintain or improve their reading performance over time.

1. What progress do RTA students make in reading over a year's time, in terms of assessment benchmarks?
2. What proportion of RTA students read proficiently at the end of third, fourth, or fifth grades?

The data examined for this evaluation was Read to Achieve (RTA) student achievement levels on two different tests of achievement: the state-required Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) administered in all Kentucky schools for grades third, fourth, and fifth in spring of 2011 and the district-selected Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) administered in all RTA schools choosing to administer MAP in fall 2011 and spring 2012.

Data Sources

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

The ITBS is a group administered, norm-referenced test of student achievement for grades K-8 and contains a variety of subtests. An overall reading score was created from student's performance on the vocabulary and reading comprehension for use in this evaluation. The ITBS has a well-established history of adequate norming procedures and has been found to be a reliable and valid assessment of student achievement. In Kentucky in spring, 2011, all students in grades 3-8 took the ITBS as part of the state assessment program.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

MAP is a computerized, adaptive test that is aligned to states' measurement systems and content standards for grades 2-10. It is designed to assess students' phonemic awareness, phonics, concepts of print, vocabulary, word structure, comprehension, and writing and to demonstrate students' understanding and skills in these areas. An overall reading score was created from students' performance on the subtests. MAP for Primary

Grades is utilized at some RTA schools for grades K-2. Norming procedures for this version of the assessment have been questioned, and there is currently inadequate information regarding the assessment's reliability and validity. This information led to CCLD's decision to exclude kindergarten and first grade MAP data in this evaluation.

RTA Students' Reading Performance after RTA

To address the question of the extent to which RTA students maintain reading performance over time, the evaluation examined the reading achievement of third, fourth, and fifth grade students who had participated in RTA during the primary grades. Although the reading achievement levels of individual students at the end of RTA participation is not known, the extent to which former RTA students read proficiently in upper elementary grades can provide information about the reading abilities of RTA students over time.

ITBS 2010-2011 data were used to determine the reading achievement of students who received RTA during their primary years. ITBS grade-level equivalents were used to determine students' performance levels in terms of the extent to which students scored at grade level or above. Student ITBS 2010-2011 data were disaggregated into the following categories for each grade based on the years during which students received RTA interventions shown in Figure 4.1:

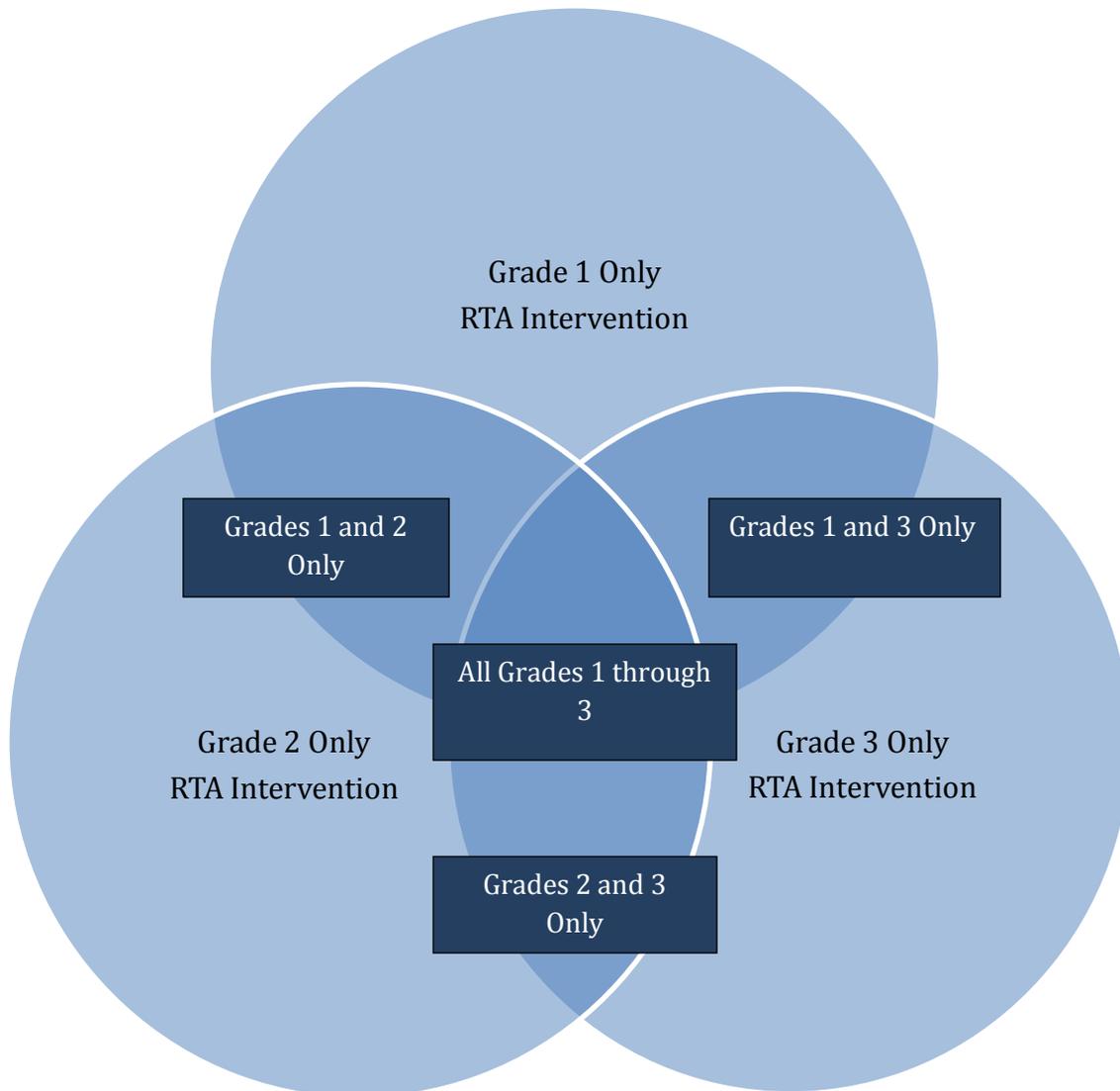


Figure 4.1. Overview of RTA interventions.

In summary, data pairing for each grade of ITBS scores are with the following RTA intervention years and academic years:

- **GRADE 5 – ITBS Spring 2011**
 - Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2008-2009
 - Received an RTA Intervention in second grade in 2007-2008
- **GRADE 4 – ITBS Spring 2011**
 - Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2009-2010
 - Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2008-2009
 - Received an RTA intervention in first grade in 2007-2008

- **GRADE 3 – ITBS Spring 2010**

- Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2010-2011
- Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2009-2010
- Received an RTA intervention in first grade in 2008-2009

These categories were used to determine whether students receiving one to three years of RTA intervention are reading at or above grade level over time. The types of interventions examined in this study are only students receiving an RTA intervention rather than interventions funded through other sources. Each of the categories listed above is examined separately in terms of students’ performance on the ITBS reading scores from the spring 2011 administration. Note: RTA intervention data is only available for Grades 2 and 3 for the fifth graders who took the ITBS test in 2010-2011 due to inconsistencies in student identification indicators prior to 2007-2008.

It is important to determine the performance of students receiving RTA interventions and whether students are reading at a proficient level consistently over time. The following table shows the total percent of students at each grade level from RTA schools scoring at or above grade equivalence in reading. The total percentage for all students in RTA schools is used in Table 4.1 to describe how the student population is performing in general prior to disaggregating the data by students receiving interventions. Recall the ITBS is not scored based on these proficiency levels; therefore, grade equivalent scores are used to describe the reading proficiency performance on this assessment.

Table 4.1

ITBS Grade Equivalent Score Overall Frequencies by Grade Level

	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
Reading At or Above Grade Level	17841 (85%)	16240 (76%)	14597 (71%)
Reading Below Grade Level	3250 (15%)	5044 (24%)	5834 (29%)

The table above shows the numbers and percentages of third, fourth, and fifth grade students reading at or above grade level and below grade level for the entire population for those grades in RTA schools. Eighty-five percent of third grade students performed at or above grade level, and there were decreases in the numbers and percentages of students reading at or above grade level for each subsequent grade level.

RTA Students in Third Grade

The ITBS 2010-2011 data for third graders (N=21,091) are disaggregated for students who received an RTA intervention in first grade only, second grade only, third grade only, first and second grade only, first and third grade only, second and third grade only, and first through third grade. Table 4.2 shows the number and percentage of third grade students receiving RTA interventions for one to three years as well as the number and percentage reading at grade level or above.

Table 4.2

ITBS Third Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions

Grades Received RTA Intervention	Number of Third Graders Receiving RTA Intervention	Third Graders Reading At or Above Grade Level
First Grade Only	2409	2029 (84%)
Second Grade Only	1294	1003 (78%)
Third Grade Only	2072	995 (48%)
First & Second Grade Only	1832	1283 (70%)
First & Third Grade Only	492	329 (67%)
Second & Third Grade Only	507	309 (61%)
First, Second, & Third Grade	1074	637 (59%)

The data show that students who have RTA interventions in first and/or second grade have the highest percentage of students performing at or above reading grade level compared to a lowest percentage of 48% percent of students reading at or above grade level who received an RTA intervention in third grade only. However, for all categories, with the exception of third grade only, at least 50% of RTA students performed at or above grade level at the time of the third grade ITBS test administration. Third-grade students who received intervention in first grade only performed at or above grade level in similar proportions to the entire third grade population in RTA schools. Seventy-eight percent of third-grade students who received intervention only in second grade performed at or below grade level. This suggests that students who participate in RTA early and do not need further intervention services in the primary grades tend to continue reading with proficiency in third grade. Conversely, students who participate in RTA multiple years or only late in primary are less likely to read proficiently at the end of primary.

RTA Students in Fourth Grade

The ITBS 2010-2011 data for fourth graders (N=21,284) are disaggregated for students receiving an RTA intervention in first grade only, second grade only, third grade only, first and second grade only, first and third grade only, second and third grade only, and first through third grade. Table 4.3 illustrates the number and percentage of fourth grade students receiving RTA interventions for one to three years in primary as well as the number and percentage reading at grade level or above.

Table 4.3

ITBS Fourth Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions

Grades Received RTA Intervention	Number of Fourth Graders Receiving RTA Intervention	Fourth Graders Reading At or Above Grade Level
First Grade Only	2069	1589 (77%)
Second Grade Only	1206	809 (67%)
Third Grade Only	1110	647 (58%)
First & Second Grade Only	1142	697 (61%)
First & Third Grade Only	538	292 (54%)
Second & Third Grade Only	806	382 (47%)
First, Second, & Third Grade	1436	748 (52%)

Again the data show that early RTA interventions in first and/or second grade are associated with the highest percentage of students performing at or above reading grade level compared to a lowest percentage of 47% percent of students reading at or above grade level who received an RTA intervention in second and third grade only. Most categories with the exception of the second and third grade only RTA intervention students include a percentage of students greater than 50% performing at or above grade level by the fourth grade ITBS test administration.

RTA Students in Fifth Grade

The ITBS 2010-2011 data for fifth graders (N=20,431) are disaggregated for students receiving an RTA intervention in second grade only, third grade only, and both second and third grade. Table 4.4 illustrates the number and percentage of fifth grade students receiving RTA interventions for one to two years as well as the number and percentage reading at grade level or above.

Table 4.4

ITBS Fifth Grade Equivalent Reading Score Frequencies by Grades Receiving RTA Interventions

Grades Received RTA Intervention	Number of Fifth Graders Receiving RTA Intervention	Fifth Graders Reading At or Above Grade Level
Second Grade Only	1955	1162 (59%)
Third Grade Only	2017	1062 (53%)
Second & Third Grade	2158	977 (45%)

Findings for fifth grade are similar to findings for third and fourth grade. Students receiving RTA interventions in second grade only have the highest percentage of RTA students performing at or above grade level by the fifth grade. However, the percentage of students who received RTA in second grade only and performed at or above grade level in fifth grade is lower than the percentage of students performing at or above grade level for the entire fifth grade population in RTA schools.

2010-2011 RTA Students' Reading Progress

In order to determine the level of reading improvement in selected RTA schools during one school year, evaluators accessed results from the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment that was administered in 142 RTA schools. The fall to spring progress of RTA students as measured by the MAP Reading subtest was analyzed for second and third grades. Evaluators reviewed all student data to determine the number of RTA students who achieved targeted gains during the 2010-11 school year. The data describe the number and percent of students at each grade level who met the grade level Rausch Unit (RIT) score target. The target RIT scores shown below were based on the 2011 norming study conducted by the test publisher, Northwest Evaluation Association. Table 4.5 shows the target RIT scores at the 30th percentile based on the 2011 MAP score chart by each grade level.

Table 4.5

2011 RIT Target Scores for Fall and Spring Administrations

Grade	Fall/Winter RIT Target Mean Score	Spring RIT Target Mean Score
Grade 1	154	167
Grade 2	172	183
Grade 3	184	193

The MAP data reported in the following tables show the average RIT score for each testing window and the number and percentage of students at RTA schools who met the fall and spring target RIT scores. Although these schools are RTA schools, only a subset of the students at each grade level received RTA interventions. Table 4.6 shows the average RIT score for all students in RTA schools, not only those students receiving an RTA intervention. It is important to note the significant decrease in the number of students for whom there was record of spring MAP administration. This limits the usefulness of the fall to spring comparisons.

Table 4.6

Percentage of RTA School Students Meeting RIT Target Score for Fall and Spring

	N	Fall 2011 RIT Target Score	Number of students RIT Target Met	Fall RIT Average Score for RTA Schools	N	Spring 2011 RIT Target Score	Number of students RIT Target Met	Spring RIT Average Score for RTA Schools
Grade 2	8181	172	5269 (64%)	177.61	1175	183	568 (48%)	167.14
Grade 3	8415	184	6053 (72%)	190.68	1048	193	626 (60%)	182.03

Table 4.7 summarizes the descriptive statistics for students receiving RTA interventions in the fall and spring.

Table 4.7

Percentage of Students Receiving an RTA Intervention Meeting RIT Target Score for Fall and Spring

	N	Fall 2011 RIT Target Score	Number of Students Meeting Target RIT score	Fall RIT Average Score for RTA Schools	N	Number of Students Meeting Target RIT Score	Spring 2011 RIT Target Score	Spring RIT Average Score for RTA Schools
Grade 2	793	172	123 (16%)	158.33	73	18 (25%)	183	139.7
Grade 3	648	184	176 (27%)	176.67	77	39 (51%)	193	171.2

The trend seen with the total number of students in RTA schools above, the number of students with MAP data for the spring administration is considerably lower than that for the fall administration. The notable percentage of students receiving an RTA intervention reaching the RIT Target Score occurred in the spring for Grade 3 with 51% of students reaching the target. In both grade levels, the percentage of students receiving RTA interventions and reaching the target RIT score increased from fall to spring. However, it is important to note, again, that the decrease in the numbers of students with MAP data in spring is a serious limitation.

Summary

Student data from the 2010-2011 ITBS for all students in third, fourth, and fifth grades and the MAP data from selected sites for students in second and third grades were examined in this achievement evaluation. The students who received intervention in only third grade were less likely to perform at higher levels than those who had one, two or three years of interventions in earlier grades (interventions in first and/or second grades). The number of students receiving an RTA intervention in first grade results in the highest percentage of students performing at or above grade level in later grades. This suggests that early intervention is critical, and that those who continue to need intervention in several grades are likely to have been farther behind than those who completed their intervention support in one year only.

The consistent percentage of over 50% performing at or above grade level for students who receive an RTA intervention at some point for all grades ITBS tested (third, fourth, and fifth graders) suggest maintained performance for RTA intervention students over time.

Within the context of the serious limitations inherent in the MAP administration, fall and spring MAP test data from 142 RTA schools suggest that second and third grade students who participate in RTA interventions make gains in reading across the year. A greater percentage of RTA students achieved benchmark scores on the MAP in the spring than did so in the fall.

Chapter 5

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development's evaluation of the RTA program, 2011-2012, included an implementation component and an achievement component. The implementation component examined how schools are implementing the program statewide and investigated how RTA is implemented at the local level in seven case study schools. The achievement component focused on RTA students' progress over the course of the academic year as well as the achievement of third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students who participated in RTA during their primary years. This chapter summarizes the major findings from both evaluation components and provides recommendations for future implementation of the RTA program. Recommendations for future evaluations are also presented.

RTA Implementation

The implementation component of the evaluation focused on the following research questions:

- RTA teachers: Who are they, and what do they do?
- RTA students: What are their experiences?
- What are stakeholders' perceptions of RTA?
- To what extent does RTA support effective systems of intervention (RtI)?

Data to answer these questions came from statewide surveys of RTA teachers, administrators, and classroom teachers in all 322 RTA schools.

RTA Teachers: Their Characteristics and their Work

Key finding: In general, RTA teachers are experienced teachers with advanced degrees. Based on comparison school interviews, RTA teachers appear to be better trained than interventionists in schools without RTA funding. However, within the population of RTA schools, there is wide variation in RTA teachers' level of training to teach their intervention. Time interventionists spend in training ranges from no or very few hours to hundreds of hours of professional development related to the reading intervention. RTA requires that RTA teachers be "highly trained"; yet the level of training that constitutes highly trained, beyond a minimum of three years teaching experience, is not specified in the program requirements.

Recommendation: The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) should clarify its definition of "highly trained" to ensure the state's most vulnerable students are served by the most knowledgeable and qualified reading educators. In addition to parameters

regarding years of teaching experience, KDE may consider providing parameters related to advanced education in reading instruction and training in the school's interventions as guidelines for schools when hiring "highly trained" reading educators.

Key finding: Overall, RTA teachers spend the majority of the school day and school year working with low-achieving readers. It does not appear that they engage in additional duties that pull them away from students to any larger extent than teachers serving other roles in schools. They do serve in literacy leadership roles, such as serving on RtI teams and in some cases providing professional development for their colleagues. Also, RTA teachers collaborate with classroom teachers about RTA students, although the level of collaboration varies across schools.

Recommendation: RTA teachers would likely benefit from focused professional development and support in the areas of literacy leadership, collaboration, and communication. Future KDE webinars, newsletters, and other state-level support structures might address these areas of need. RTA teachers' focus on direct services to low-achieving readers during the school day should be maintained.

RTA Students: Literacy Instruction and Experiences

Key finding: Although the majority of students participate in reading intervention between 15 and 24 weeks, approximately one-third of RTA students participate for more than 24 weeks. In some schools, teachers did not appear to have clear processes for exiting students from intervention or for providing more intensive interventions for students who were not successful in RTA over the short term. There did not appear to be a clear pattern of collaboration with classroom teachers around exiting students from RTA.

Recommendation: RTA teachers and schools need guidance related to exiting students from RTA and support for implementing more intensive interventions for students who are not successful in RTA. RTA and classroom teachers need designated time for communication and collaboration around RTA students' needs.

Key finding: In intervention classes, students received more intensive focus than in the regular classroom literacy block in reading, writing, thinking, and talking about texts. However, classroom teachers expressed concern about what RTA students miss when they leave the classroom for RTA. Whereas some schools require that RTA occur during the literacy block, other schools require that RTA occur outside the literacy block. Regardless, missing classroom time can create additional difficulties for students who already are struggling to keep up in the classroom.

Recommendation: RTA and classroom teachers should work together closely to ensure RTA students do not miss critical content. Clear exiting procedures and a focus on

reducing the number of weeks of RTA interventions for students are important in ensuring students are seamlessly integrated back into regular classroom activities. Further, RTA students would likely benefit from more focused collaboration between RTA and classroom teachers within the literacy block.

Key finding: Classroom teachers still rate RTA students relatively low in critical areas of literacy, even at the end of the year. None of the second or third grade students who were rated by classroom teachers received ratings of proficient in any of the literacy areas assessed.

Recommendation: Schools should focus on improving systems of support for students who continue to have difficulties with literacy even after participating in RTA. Intensive Tier 3 interventions should be implemented for students who do not successfully exit RTA. For students who do successfully exit, continued progress monitoring and ongoing classroom support should occur to ensure that literacy learning is maintained after RTA.

Stakeholders' Perceptions of RTA

Key finding: The majority of stakeholders perceive RTA interventions are effective. Most RTA teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, and parents responded positively to questions about their schools' RTA interventions. However, some stakeholders, including administrators, held negative perceptions about interventions' effectiveness at some grades.

Recommendation: Continue to allow schools to petition to change their interventions, and publicize the procedures for doing so. Teams responsible for RTA should ensure all teachers in the building understand RTA goals and processes. Improve communication with classroom teachers about intervention systems.

RTA and RtI Systems

Key finding: RTA is an integral part of schools' systems for reading intervention. School personnel usually considered the RTA intervention a Tier 2 intervention for students who are not meeting benchmarks on screening assessments. RTA schools had progress monitoring systems in place, but they did not tend to have clear processes for exiting students from RTA interventions. Also, schools did not appear to provide more intensive, targeted interventions for students who were not successful in RTA. Instead, schools tended to consider special education as a Tier 3 intervention.

Recommendation: KDE should provide additional guidance to RTA schools about effective RtI systems, including developing clear systems for exiting students from RTA, how to support students who are not successful in RTA, and how to fund more intensive

interventions. Although referral to special education after a certain amount of time is an inherent characteristic of intervention programs, such as Reading Recovery, this practice should be revised when the intervention program is being used as a Tier 2 intervention. Some children may need more time in the intervention or may benefit from an even more intensive approach.

Key finding: To a large extent, classroom teachers did not report using differentiated reading instruction for students having difficulty with reading.

Recommendation: Increased collaboration between RTA teachers and classroom teachers within the literacy block would support differentiated instruction for RTA students.

Key finding: In matched comparison schools, administrators reported leaving a significant number of low-achieving readers under-served by interventions. Also, intervention teachers in comparison schools were in need of training to teach their intervention, according to administrators. Several comparison schools were not eligible to apply for RTA funding when funding rounds were open, because they were receiving Reading First funds at the time. All administrators in comparison schools reported a need for funding to support interventions for low-achieving readers.

Recommendation: Expand RTA funding for more schools. Allow new rounds of funding for schools not eligible to apply due to Reading First, or schools that were not successful in applying for RTA during earlier rounds.

RTA Students' Reading Achievement

The achievement component of the evaluation focused on the following research questions:

- What progress do RTA students make in reading, in terms of assessment benchmarks?
- What proportion of RTA students read proficiently at the end and after primary?

Proficiency at the End of and After Primary

Key finding: Greater than 50% of third, fourth, and fifth grade students who received RTA services during the primary grades performed at or above grade level on the ITBS. Students who participated in RTA in first grade and did not participate again in any other grade performed at levels similar to students who never participated in RTA during the primary grades. Students who participate in RTA only in third grade perform at lower levels overall than students who participate in RTA only in first grade or only in second grade.

Recommendation: RTA schools would do well to serve as many students as exhibit a need in first and second grade. Schools should serve students who exhibit need in third grade as well, but more intensive interventions than are currently being implemented should be provided for third grade students who are not reading well.

Key finding: A large number of students participated in RTA for multiple years, even across three years of primary. Students who participate in RTA for more than one year are less likely to read at or above grade level in third and intermediate grades than students who participate for just one year.

Recommendation: Students who remain in RTA across the primary years may be those students who were furthest behind in reading. RTA schools should provide even more intensive interventions (i.e. one-on-one) for students who continue to struggle with reading after one year of RTA. Classroom teachers and reading specialists should collaborate to implement more intensive, high-quality reading instruction for these students across the school day and year as part of a tiered Rtl program. These students also would benefit from summer reading programs to diminish summer reading loss.

Achievement across One Year

Key finding: A greater percentage of second and third grade students reached benchmark levels on the MAP assessment from fall to spring, although that percentage was still small. Inconsistent administration and/or reporting on the MAP seriously limited its usefulness in this evaluation.

Recommendation: The MAP assessment's usefulness for evaluation purposes should be re-evaluated. To ascertain RTA student gains in reading across a year at a statewide level, a common valid and reliable norm-referenced assessment should be administered consistently across all RTA schools or in a sufficient sample of schools.

Recommendations for Future Evaluations

Future evaluations should follow RTA students over multiple years to examine students' intervention experiences and responses to those interventions over time and across the primary years. In addition to tracking RTA students' proficiency at the end of primary and in the intermediate grades, it is important to track all RTA students' gains across the primary years. Additional analyses should be conducted to see how time in intervention relates to student growth in reading and how RTA implementation and classroom instruction relates to student growth in reading.

The current evaluation focused on instruction and performance of students in the second and third grades. However, this evaluation showed the majority of RTA teachers spend most of their time teaching Reading Recovery, a first-grade intervention. Future

evaluations should focus on the performance and experiences of first-grade students. Evaluators face challenges in that there is no existing large and reliable assessment dataset at the first-grade level. Evaluators may need to collect new assessment data from first-grade students who participate in RTA.

The current evaluation examined educators' and parents' perceptions of RTA but it did not seek to learn the perceptions of RTA students themselves. Future evaluations should gather information about how students feel about participating in RTA.

During the case study school interviews, teachers and administrators pointed to the benefits of RTA for linguistically diverse students. Future evaluations should include components designed to examine linguistically diverse learners in RTA schools and their experiences in RTA interventions. Additional analyses on how many linguistically diverse learners are enrolled in RTA interventions, how long they spend in interventions, and their progress as a result of intervention should be conducted.

References

- Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C. M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., & Tilly, W. D. (2008). *Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to intervention and multi-tier intervention in the primary grades. A practice guide*. Washington D.C: 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>
- Kentucky Department of Education (2008). *A guide to the Kentucky Systems of Intervention*. Frankfort, KY: Kentucky Department of Education.
- MGT of America, Inc. (2011). *Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve program: 2010-2011 report*. Lexington, KY: Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.
- National Institute for Literacy, Partnership for Reading (2001). *Read Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*. Jessup: MD
- Rightmyer, E. C. (2008). *Read to Achieve evaluation: A three-year synthesis*. Lexington, Kentucky: Collaborative Center for Literacy Development. Retrieved from <http://www.kentuckyliteracy.org/research/projects/readtoachieve>
- Taylor, B. M., & Pearson, P. D. (2000). *The CIERA school change classroom observation scheme*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Appendix A

RTA 2011 Program Evaluation: Classroom Teacher Survey

You are being invited to take part in a research study about the RTA intervention program in your school. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and if at any point during the survey you do not wish to respond or share certain information, there will be no penalty for doing so. All of your responses on this survey will be anonymous and will in no way influence your job at the school. The survey will last approximately 15-minutes. We greatly appreciate your time and effort in completing this survey.

What grade(s) do you teach? Please check all that apply:

- Kindergarten
- first Grade
- second Grade
- third Grade
- Other (Please Specify) _____

How many years of teaching experience do you have?

What is the name of your school?

What RTA funded reading intervention program(s) are your students receiving? Please check all that apply:

- Reading Recovery
- Reading Mastery/SRA
- Early/Soar to Success
- Earobics
- Fast for Word
- Scott Foresman
- Early Int. in Reading
- Head Sprout
- Voyager
- Harcourt
- Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM)
- Other (Please Specify) _____

In what ways were you involved in your school's RTA intervention program (in some capacity) this school year? Please check all that apply:

- Assisted in selecting teaching materials
- Observation of RTA teacher
- Collaborated in planning RTA instruction
- Collaborated in making decisions about individual students' entry/exit in the RTA intervention program
- Participated in RTA team meetings
- Collaborated in developing and/or providing professional development for the RTA intervention program
- Participated in professional development conducted by RTA teacher
- Received assistance from RTA teacher related to your instruction
- Other (Please specify) _____

Please indicate how often you communicate about RTA students with your school's RTA intervention teacher:

- Never
- 2-3 times a year
- Once a Month
- Once a Week
- Daily

In what ways have you collaborated with your school's RTA teacher this year? Please check all that apply:

- Developing professional development activities
- Sharing instructional strategies
- Selecting teaching materials
- Consulting on students' progress
- Participating in RTA meetings
- Planning RTA classroom instruction
- Planning my classroom instruction
- Monitoring student progress
- Identifying a student for intervention
- Releasing a student from intervention
- Other (Please specify) _____
- I have not collaborated with the RTA teacher this year.

If you meet with the RTA teacher to discuss student progress, what type of information do you use?
Please check all that apply:

- Sharing student information
- Discussing class observations or anecdotal records
- Review existing data (e.g., curriculum records, permanent product, etc.)
- Discuss information provided by other teachers
- Discuss information provided by students' parents
- Assessment data
- I do not discuss student progress with the RTA teacher

How often do you adjust your classroom instruction for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with your school's RTA intervention teacher?

- Never
- 2-3 times a year
- Once a Month
- Once a Week
- Daily

What component(s) of your classroom instruction have you adjusted for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with your school's RTA intervention teacher? Please check all that apply:

- Reading materials
- Method of providing instruction
- Grouping
- Instructional content/skills
- Other (Please specify): _____
- Not applicable

How often does the RTA intervention teacher adjust their classroom instruction for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with you?

- Never
- 2-3 times a year
- Once a Month
- Once a Week
- Daily
- I don't know

What component(s) of the RTA intervention teacher's instruction for RTA students did they change based on the feedback and/or communication with you? Please check all that apply:

- Reading materials
- Method of providing instruction
- Grouping
- Instructional content/skills
- Other (Please specify) _____
- Not applicable

How would you rate the effectiveness of the RTA intervention(s) implemented at your grade level?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Somewhat Ineffective
- Very Ineffective

If the RTA intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:

- Meets multiple students' needs
- Student materials are interesting
- Intervention students are reading better in my class
- Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students show increased confidence in my class
- Intervention students show increased positive attitude in my class
- Approach is consistent with my teaching
- Other (Please specify): _____

If the RTA intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:

- Meets few students' needs
- Student materials are lacking
- Intervention students are not progressing in reading
- Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students' confidence has not improved
- Intervention students' attitude has not improved
- Approach is inconsistent with my teaching
- Other (Please specify): _____

When a student in your class is having reading difficulties, what do you do? Please check all that apply:

- Assign different activities than for other students
- Assign different tests for the student
- More frequent process monitoring/assessment
- Provide more reading instruction time for the student
- Provide additional at-home activities
- Seek help from RTA teacher or other reading specialist
- Refer for special education testing
- Consult with other teachers
- Other (Please specify): _____

Please rank who is primarily responsible for the reading achievement of the RTA students in your school, with 1 being the most responsible and 5 being the least responsible.

- _____ Classroom Teacher
- _____ Intervention Teacher
- _____ Administrators
- _____ Parents or Guardians
- _____ Students

Please answer the following questions while keeping a reading focus in mind.

I can deal with almost any learning problem

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

There is little I can do to ensure that all my students make significant progress this year.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

I am certain that I am making a difference in the lives of my students.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Some students are not going to make a lot of progress this year, no matter what I do.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

I am good at helping all the students in my classes make significant improvement.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Factors beyond my control have a greater influence on my students' achievement than I do.

- 1 = Strong Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult student.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3 = Somewhat Agree
- 4
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Appendix B

RTA 2011 Program Evaluation: Administrator Survey

What is the name of your school? (This question is being asked for response rate purposes only. We will not match your responses to your school.)

How long have you been an administrator at this school?

Were you involved in selecting the RTA program(s)?

- Yes
- No

In what activity(s) did you engage for your school's RTA intervention program (in some capacity) this school year? Please check all that apply:

- Assisted in selecting teacher materials
- Evaluated RTA teacher (either formal or informal)
- Observation of RTA teacher
- Assisted in planning RTA instruction
- Assisted in making decisions about individual students' entry/exit in the RTA intervention program
- Participated in RTA team meetings
- Assisted in developing and/or providing professional development for the RTA intervention program
- Participated in professional development conducted by the RTA teacher
- Other (Please specify) _____

Please identify who is involved on the RTA team at your school. Please check all that apply:

- RTA-funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal or other administrator(s)
- Counselor
- Special Education Teacher
- Parent
- Other (Please specify): _____

Please identify the RTA team's activities. Please check all that apply:

- Develop and review student selection and exit criteria.
- Review individual student progress
- Analyze student data
- Plan professional development
- Support parent involvement
- Other (Please specify): _____

Please identify how often the RTA team meets.

- Weekly
- Monthly
- 1-2 times/year
- Never
- Other (Please specify): _____

How would you rate the effectiveness of the KINDERGARTEN RTA intervention(s) implemented at your school in general?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Somewhat Ineffective
- Very Ineffective
- Not Applicable (My school does not have an RTA-funded intervention at Kindergarten.)

If the KINDERGARTEN intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:

- Meets multiple students' needs
- Student materials are interesting
- Intervention students are reading better
- Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

If the KINDERGARTEN intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:

- Meets few students' needs
- Student materials are lacking
- Intervention students are not progressing in reading
- Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students do not show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students do not show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

How would you rate the effectiveness of the FIRST GRADE RTA intervention(s) implemented at your school in general?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Somewhat Ineffective
- Very Ineffective
- Not Applicable (My school does not have an RTA-funded intervention at first grade.)

If the FIRST GRADE intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:

- Meets multiple students' needs
- Student materials are interesting
- Intervention students are doing reading better
- Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

If the FIRST GRADE intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:

- Meets few students' needs
- Student materials are lacking
- Intervention students are not progressing in reading
- Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students do not show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students do not show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

How would you rate the effectiveness of the SECOND GRADE RTA intervention(s) implemented at your school in general?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Somewhat Ineffective
- Very Ineffective
- Not Applicable (My school does not have an RTA-funded intervention at second grade.)

If the SECOND GRADE intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:

- Meets multiple students' needs
- Student materials are interesting
- Intervention students are doing reading better
- Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

If the SECOND GRADE intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:

- Meets few students' needs
- Student materials are lacking
- Intervention students are not progressing in reading
- Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students do not show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students do not show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

How would you rate the effectiveness of the THIRD GRADE RTA intervention(s) implemented at your school in general?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Somewhat Ineffective
- Very Ineffective
- Not Applicable (My school does not have an RTA-funded intervention at third grade.)

If the THIRD GRADE intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. Please check all that apply:

- Meets multiple students' needs
- Student materials are interesting
- Intervention students are doing better in reading
- Intervention students enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

If the THIRD GRADE intervention is not effective, please explain why. Please check all that apply:

- Meets few students' needs
- Student materials are lacking
- Intervention students are not progressing in reading
- Intervention students do not enjoy the reading instruction
- Intervention students do not show increased confidence with reading
- Intervention students do not show increased positive attitude with reading
- Other (Please specify): _____

In addition to teaching the intervention class, what other duties does the RTA intervention teacher perform at your school? Please check all that apply:

- Bus Duty
- Lunch Duty
- Hall Duty
- Substitute Teacher
- Office Duties
- Other (Please specify): _____
- Other (Please specify): _____

If you indicated the RTA intervention teacher performed one of these duties, please indicate approximately how much time s/he spends on that duty per month (in minutes):

- _____ Bus Duty
- _____ Lunch Duty
- _____ Hall Duty
- _____ Substitute teacher
- _____ Supervise after school program
- _____ Other (Please specify):
- _____ Other (Please specify):

Please rank who is primarily responsible for the reading achievement of the RTA students in your school, with 1 being the most responsible and 5 being the least responsible.

- _____ Classroom Teacher
- _____ Intervention Teacher
- _____ Administrators
- _____ Parents or Guardians
- _____ Students

Appendix C

Description of Intervention Programs

Early Intervention in Reading

This program was developed by Barbara Taylor at the University of Minnesota. Instruction consists of working with students as they read aloud and focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, word recognition, and writing within the context of the story. Reading selections generally are quite short so that children can read the entire story. Stories and retellings of picture books are divided into four categories according to their length, and children progress through these reading materials during the school year. This program serves kindergarten through fourth grade. In kindergarten through second grade the program is whole-group instruction with additional support provided for struggling readers whereas in third and fourth grade the program is 20 minute small group sessions four days a week.

Early Success/Soar to Success

Developed by Barbara Taylor, University of Minnesota, and published at Houghton Mifflin, this reading intervention program's primary goal is to accelerate literacy growth for children in grades 1-4. Incorporating six components, this program is designed for small groups and is provided in addition to students' core reading program. Groups usually consist of 5-7 students, who follow a three-day routine in grades 1-2 (Early Success) and a five-day routine in grades 3-4 (Soar to Success). In Early Success, daily lessons provide direct instruction in three parts: Rereading for fluency, Reading the Books of the Week, and Working with Words/Writing Sentences. In Soar to Success, lessons last approximately 30-40 minutes and address the following reading skills: Phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Lessons utilize small group instruction that uses motivating literature, reciprocal teaching, and graphic organizers. In both Early Success and Soar to Success, teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development training prior to implementing the intervention.

Earobics

Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Earobics is a multi-sensory, interactive software reading program intended to offer a diverse, individualized approach to literacy. There are two versions: Earobics Foundations (Grades Pre-K-1) and Earobics Connections (Grades 2-3). The primary goal of the Earobics programs is to improve students' reading achievement by the end of third grade for all students, regardless of ability level, socioeconomic status, gender, or ethnicity. The program is designed to address children's skills in phonemic awareness, auditory processing, and phonics, as well as develop cognitive and language skills required for comprehension. Individual lessons by level of instruction address recognizing and blending sounds, rhyming, and discriminating phonemes within words. The computer software program integrates the use of music and reading and includes picture/word cards, letter-sound decks, big books, little books, and leveled readers for independent or group reading activities. The Earobics intervention program provides teacher-

centered professional development sessions at each implementation level to teach educators skills and strategies they can use immediately in the classroom.

Fast ForWord

Fast ForWord is a series of computer based programs developed and published by Scientific Learning. The programs are designed to increase cognitive skills such as memory, attention, processing rate, and sequencing to ultimately lead to improved critical language and reading skills. There is a language and literacy series that provides foundational reading and language skills, and a reading series that builds critical reading skills. These programs serve kindergarten through 12th grade and students will spend between 30 and 100 minutes five days a week for four to 16 weeks on interactive and adaptive exercises.

Literacy by Design

Literacy by Design is a five component program designed by experts in comprehension, vocabulary, fluency/phonics and phonemic awareness/assessment, writing, and English language learners. This Houghton Mifflin Harcourt publication serves kindergarten through fifth grade. The 60 minute daily program has both a reading and writing track which involves whole class, small group with leveled readers, and independent work. Additional features of this program include weekly assessments for students and online resources for teachers.

MimioSprout Early Reading (Formerly Headsprout)

MimioSprout Early Reading was originally the Headsprout Early Reading program developed in 1999 by a team of scientists led by Dr. T. Joe Layng. Currently the program is published by Mimio, a Newell Rubbermaid Company. This online computer-based program serves pre-kindergarten through second grade students with 20 minute animated episodes designed to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The first 40 episodes help students develop reading basics while the last 40 episodes are geared at producing independent readers, and all of the episodes adapt to the student's responsiveness.

My Sidewalks on Scott Foresman Reading Street: Early Reading Intervention

This program was developed by a team of experts, practitioners, and researchers based on the results of Project Optimize, a five year longitudinal research study designed to identify children at-risk and becoming struggling readers and provide intervention early in the student's academic career. This Pearson publication serves kindergarten and first grade by providing 30 minutes of support a day to improve reading achievement. The program provides interactive systematic instruction in learning letter names and sounds; segmenting, blending, and integrating; word reading; and sentence reading through the use of leveled reading, enhancing vocabulary, coaching/modeling, and assessments.

Reading Recovery

Developed by Marie Clay, Reading Recovery provides a supplementary model of instruction for children who are at-risk in their second year of primary (first grade). The goals of Reading

Recovery are to promote accelerated literacy learning and bring these children to the average of their classroom peers. Children from the lowest 20% of their class receive intensive one-to-one instruction for 30 minutes daily for 12-20 weeks. Instruction involves a variety of reading and writing experiences within the context of the story, including phonological awareness, visual perception of letters, word recognition, phonics/decoding skills, fluency, and comprehension. Reading Recovery teachers participate in a full year of university-based training, followed by supportive, ongoing professional development at the local, regional, and national levels.

Small Group Interventions in Reading Recovery Schools. In addition to one-on-one instruction, Reading Recovery teachers may also utilize small group interventions (i.e. Early Literacy/Guided Reading Groups, Small Literacy Groups, Leveled Literacy Instruction) to address different literacy skills with students at different grade levels and those who may need less intensive interventions. Since the onset of RTA, some Reading Recovery schools have adopted a Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM), described below. In those schools, small group interventions, such as those named above, have become folded into the CIM model.

Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM). Developed at the Illinois Reading Recovery Center for Literacy, the Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM) focuses on providing layers of instructional interventions using differentiated classroom instruction and supplemental interventions within small group and one-to-one settings. The intervention is designed to be implemented in two waves: K-3 and 4-12. Wave 1 focuses on increasing overall reading achievement of students by grade 3 to decrease the numbers of students identified with a learning disability, while Wave 2 focuses on strategies for reading and writing. CIM utilizes the training, knowledge, and expertise of the Reading Recovery Program. Reading Recovery teachers provide training and ongoing professional development for intervention teachers and Literacy Coaches provide training and support for classroom and early intervention teachers. Lessons include reading familiar books, letter and journal writing, diagnostic reading assessments, and the introduction and the reading of a new book. Small group interventions are organized into the following areas: guided reading plus groups; assisted writing groups; writing process groups; and comprehension focus groups.

SRA/Reading Mastery

Published by McGraw Hill, SRA/Reading Mastery uses the Direct Instruction approach developed by Siegfried Englemann at the University of Oregon. This model features interactive lessons (approximately 30-45 minutes each) presented to small groups of students (ages 5-14), grouping of students by performance level, and frequent assessment of student progress in the classroom setting. The main features of the model include reading, language arts, and math curricula, highly scripted instructional strategies and ongoing assessments. The intervention program incorporates lessons to address phonemic awareness, phonics and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The primary goal is to improve student performance so that by fifth grade, students perform at least a year and a half beyond grade level.

Voyager Interventions

Voyager Learning programs are published by the Cambium Learning Group and include several intervention programs for grades K-12. The two programs most frequently used in RTA schools are reviewed below.

Voyager Passport. The Voyager Passport intervention program is designed to be a supplemental system of reading intervention for grades K-5. The intervention focuses on five areas of reading: phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, word reading, sight words, and vocabulary). Lessons (approximately 30-40 minutes) consist of direct instruction, corrective feedback, and practice time in a small group setting. Ongoing assessment and data management are integrated into daily routines to allow teachers to provide appropriate and differentiated instruction. Voyager Passport includes 120 lessons at each grade level which are divided into 10-day units called "Adventures."

Voyager Universal Literacy System. The Voyager Universal Literacy System is an intervention program appropriate for grades K-3 and includes core reading curriculum; a progress monitoring system that measures each student's reading progress and identifies struggling readers; a struggling reader intervention that includes additional instruction time and summer school; professional development for teachers, principals, and specialists; a home study curriculum; and computer-based practice and reinforcement in phonological skills, comprehension, fluency, language development, and writing. Lessons (approximately 50-minutes in length) incorporate individual reading instruction, higher-level comprehension activities, problem solving, and writing, as well as whole classroom, small group, and independent group settings. The intervention highlights ongoing assessments along with biweekly reviews for struggling students and quarterly assessments for all students.

Appendix D

RTA Field Observer Interview Guides

KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW GUIDE 2011-12

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about the RTA program at your school, including the overall program of interventions to support struggling readers. We want to understand how students are selected and exited, who is involved in making decisions about students and program(s) and how that process works, what intervention(s) you are using, understand any challenges your school has faced in implementing the program, and get your recommendations for improvement. Your input is greatly appreciated and will provide valuable insights for the RTA program.

In the final written report, your school will only be identified based on its geographic location – east, west, central, etc. – and its population density – urban, rural, etc.

PROGRAM OF SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING READERS

1. Describe the literacy program that all students receive in regular classrooms.
2. Describe the overall program of support for struggling readers at your school.
3. How do classroom teachers support struggling readers in the classroom?
4. How does RTA fit into the school-wide program of support?
5. Who makes decisions about the system of interventions in the school? What is your role? Other than RTA, what people and/or program(s) are used to support struggling readers?
6. What training have teachers had on collecting and interpreting student reading data?
7. Does your school have an RTA team? Describe the membership of the RTA Team.
8. What are their roles on the RTA team or the larger structure of support for struggling readers? How is the team involved in screening and progress monitoring of struggling readers?

9. Describe the frequency and structure of the RTA team meetings. Who schedules them and takes the lead for the discussions? What reporting or monitoring exists for the team meetings?
10. How effective do you think your school is in identifying and supporting struggling readers? What evidence do you have? What would make it more effective?
11. Why are some students not successful even after RTA intervention? How do you determine if a student needs additional instruction? What happens to those students after they leave RTA?

STUDENT SELECTION

12. What is the process for selecting struggling students for RTA support? How do you identify children at low, moderate, or high-risk for developing reading difficulties? Are there specific selection criteria? (If there is a written description, can we get copy?) Are there specific assessments your school is using to identify students?
13. How often does your school screen for struggling students?
14. What is the process for exiting students from RTA? Are there specific criteria? Assessments? (If written, can we get a copy?)
15. Talk with me about students who are struggling, but are not being served by RTA. How many students are there? What prevents them from being served? Are they served in other ways?

STUDENT IMPACT

16. In your opinion, what is the overall impact of the RTA program on student achievement? Can you give some examples?
17. What are some of your school's greatest RTA success stories?
18. What are the biggest benefits of RTA? The biggest challenges?
19. What do you think has been the impact of the RTA program on eliminating or closing the gap among students from traditionally underrepresented groups, including:
 - Students from low-income backgrounds
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students from racial minority groups
 - Students with limited English proficiency

Can you give some examples?

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

20. How are parents involved in decisions about interventions for their children?
21. How does the school communicate with parents of struggling readers about their children's progress?

OTHER

22. Other comments or information useful for the evaluation of the RTA program?

OPTIONAL

23. Have you made any changes in your RTA program since the program began? Are you planning any changes to your RTA program in the future?

KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE INTERVENTION TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE 2011-12

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about the RTA program at your school, including the overall program of interventions to support struggling readers. We want to understand how students are selected and exited, who is involved in making decisions about students and program(s) and how that process works, what intervention(s) you are using, understand any challenges your school has faced in implementing the program, and get your recommendations for improvement. Your input is greatly appreciated and will provide valuable insights for the RTA program.

In the final report, you and your school will only be identified by region – east, west, central, etc. – and by population density – urban, rural, etc., not by name. Thank you for your assistance.

TRAINING IN RTA INTERVENTION

1. What training did you initially have in order to teach the RTA intervention(s) at your school? How many hours, what kind of materials, what type of instruction? How well prepared do you feel like you were to teach the intervention? What process did you go through to learn to teach the intervention(s)?
2. What training have you had since you began teaching the RTA intervention(s)? What has that looked like? What types of materials were used, what was the instruction like, how often and for how many hours per year?
3. How well equipped do you feel to teach the intervention(s)? Have you always felt that way? If not, explain.

PROGRAM OF SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING READERS

4. Describe the literacy program that all students receive in regular classrooms.

5. Describe the overall program of support for struggling readers at your school.
6. How do classroom teachers support struggling readers in the classroom?
7. How does RTA fit into the school-wide program of support?
8. Who makes decisions about the system of interventions in the school? What is your role? Other than RTA, what people and/or program(s) are used to support struggling readers?
9. What training have teachers had on collecting and interpreting student reading data?
10. Does your school have an RTA team? Describe the membership of the RTA Team.
11. What are their roles on the RTA team or the larger structure of support for struggling readers? How is the team involved in screening and progress monitoring of struggling readers?
12. Describe the frequency and structure of the RTA team meetings. Who schedules them and takes the lead for the discussions? What reporting or monitoring exists for the team meetings?
13. How effective do you think your school is in identifying and supporting struggling readers? What evidence do you have? What would make it more effective?
14. How effective is the RTA intervention in meeting the needs of struggling readers? What are the greatest benefits of RTA? The biggest challenges?
15. What are some of your school's greatest RTA success stories?
16. Why are some students not successful even after RTA intervention? How do you determine if a student needs additional instruction? What happens to those students after they leave RTA?

STUDENT SELECTION

17. What is the process for selecting struggling students for RTA support? How do you identify children at low, moderate, or high-risk for developing reading difficulties? Are there specific selection criteria? How often does your school screen for struggling students?
18. What is the process for exiting students from RTA? Are there specific criteria? Assessments?
19. Talk with me about students who are struggling, but are not being served by RTA. How many students are there? What prevents them from being served? Are they served in other ways?

RTA CLASS

20. How often is this instruction or intervention implemented per week? How long is each session?

21. How much time do you spend with the intervention students? How many students do you work with?
22. About how many weeks do students typically spend in RTA? How many days a week?
23. Describe a typical intervention class experience for students. Small group instruction? One-on-one instruction?
24. What interventions are you teaching? How are these similar or different?
25. What does the instruction include? What components of reading instruction are included in the curriculum that you use (comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary)?
26. To what extent is the RTA program philosophically or instructionally consistent with classroom literacy programs? Are there ever conflicts or inconsistencies? Explain.

COLLABORATION

27. In what ways do you collaborate with classroom teachers to support RTA students?
 - Designing instruction for RTA?
 - Adjusting classroom instruction?
 - Monitoring student progress?

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

28. How are parents involved in decisions about interventions for their children?
29. How does the school communicate with parents about the progress of struggling readers?

STUDENT IMPACT

30. What do you think has been the impact of the RTA program on eliminating or closing the gap among students from traditionally under-performing groups, including:
 - Students from low-income backgrounds
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students from racial minority groups
 - Students with limited English proficiency

Can you give some specific examples?

OTHER

31. Other comments or information useful for the evaluation of the RTA program?

KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE CLASSROOM TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE 2011-12

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about the RTA program at your school, including the overall program of interventions to support struggling readers. We want to understand how students are selected and exited, who is involved in making decisions about students and program(s) and how that process works, what intervention(s) you are using, understand any challenges your school has faced in implementing the program, and get your recommendations for improvement. Your input is greatly appreciated and will provide valuable insights for the RTA program.

In the final report, you and your school will only be identified by region – east, west, central, etc. – and by population density – urban, rural, etc., not by name. Thank you for your assistance.

PROGRAM OF SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING READERS

1. Describe the literacy program that all students receive in regular classrooms.
2. Describe the overall program of support for struggling readers at your school.
3. How do you support struggling readers in the classroom?
4. How does RTA fit into the school-wide program of support? How does RTA fit in with RTI?
5. Who makes decisions about the system of interventions in the school? What is your role? Other than RTA, what people and/or program(s) are used to support struggling readers?
6. What training have you had on collecting and interpreting student reading assessment data?
7. Does your school have an RTA team? Describe the membership of the RTA Team.
8. What are their roles on the RTA team or the larger structure of support for struggling readers? How is the team involved in screening and progress monitoring of struggling readers?
9. (If a teacher reports being on the RTA team): Describe the frequency and structure of the RTA team meetings. Who schedules them and takes the lead for the discussions? What reporting or monitoring exists for the team meetings?
10. How effective do you think your school is in identifying and supporting struggling readers? What evidence do you have? What would make it more effective?
11. How effective is the RTA intervention in meeting the needs of struggling readers? What are the greatest benefits of RTA? The biggest challenges?

STUDENT SELECTION

12. What is the process for selecting struggling students for RTA support? How do you identify children at low, moderate, or high-risk for developing reading difficulties? Are there specific selection criteria?) How are you involved in the selection of students to participate in RTA? Are there specific assessments your school is using to identify students?
13. How often does your school screen for struggling students?
14. What is the process for exiting students from RTA? Are there specific criteria? Assessments? Are you involved in decisions about your students' exit from RTA?
15. Talk with me about students who are struggling, but are not being served by RTA. How many students are there in your class? What prevents them from being served? Are they being served in other ways?

COLLABORATION

16. In what ways do you collaborate with intervention teachers?
 - Designing instruction for RTA?
 - Adjusting classroom instruction?
 - Monitoring student progress?
17. How or to what extent does the RTA program or teacher support reinforce what you are teaching children in your classroom literacy program?

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

18. How are parents involved in decisions about interventions for their children?
19. How does the school communicate with parents about the progress of struggling readers?

STUDENT IMPACT

20. In your opinion, what is the overall impact of the RTA program on student achievement? What about for the specific RTA children in your class? Can you give some examples?
21. What do you think has been the impact of the RTA program on eliminating or closing the gap among students from traditionally under-performing groups, including:
 - Students from low-income backgrounds
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students from racial minority groups
 - Students with limited English proficiency

Can you give some specific examples?

OTHER

22. Other comments or information useful for the evaluation of the RTA program

Appendix E

Observation Codes and Descriptions

Level	Definition
1 - Who	
Classroom Teacher	Classroom teacher
Specialist Teacher	Reading/Title 1/Reading Resource/Special Ed./Speech/ESL
Aide	Paraprofessional/Instructional Aide
No one	No one in room
NA	No instruction is occurring
2 - Grouping	
Whole Class/Large Group	All of the children in the class or a group of more than 10 (if <10, code small group)
Small Group	2 or more groups, if >10 children in group, large group
Pairs	Working in pairs
Individual	Children are working independently
Other/NA	Some other grouping practice/none of the above/no instruction
3 - Major Focus	
Reading	Reading, word recog., reading comp., writing in response to reading, literature study, reading vocab.
Composite/Writing	Writing for the purpose of expressing or communicating ideas (but not writing in which major purpose is to respond to reading); learning how to write; writer's workshop, creative writing, report writing
Other Language	Aspect of language arts other than the above; grammar, mechanics, oral expression, etc.
Other/NA	None of the above seem to apply
4 - Activity	
Reading connected text	Students are engaged in reading text. Includes silent reading, choral reading, oral turn-taking reading.
Listening to text	Listening to text. If teacher is reading to students, code as l, even if the students are to be following along.
Vocabulary	Discussing/working on a word meaning (s)
Meaning of text, lower	Engaged in talk (m1) or writing (m2) about the meaning of text which is at a lower level of thinking or lower level of text interpretation. Journal entry about text, fill-in-the blank
Meaning of text, higher	Involved in talk (m3) or writing (m4) about the meaning of text which is engaging them in higher level thinking. This is talk or writing about text that is challenging to the children and is at either a higher level of text interpretation or goes beyond the text: generalization, application, evaluation, aesthetic response.
Comprehension skill	Comp. activity (not strategy) which is at a lower level of thinking (e.g., main idea, cause-effect, fact-

	opinion). Activity designed to foster their capacity to understand comp. skills
Comp. Strategy	Comp. strategy that will transfer to other reading and in which this notion of transfer is mentioned. A strategy is a routine designed to improve children's overall comp. especially for new passages. e.g., reciprocal teaching, questioning the author. Emphasis is on a transferable routine.
Writing	Writing ideas (not just words); focus is composition, not meaning of text
Word ID	Focus on identifying words. e.g., teacher is telling them a word when they get stuck during reading or reviewing words
Sight Words	Drilling on sight words
Phonics/PA	Focusing on symbol/sound correspondences, letter-by-letter decoding, or decoding by onset and rime or analogy, but this is not tied to decoding of words while reading. Decoding multisyllabic words
Word Rec. Strategies	Focusing on use of 1 or more strategies to figure out words while reading, typically prompted
Letter ID	Focusing on letter name identification
Spelling	Focusing on how to spell words
Other/NA	None of the above or other
5 - Material	
Narrative	Narrative trade book (picture book, novel, poem, other)
Informational	Informational trade book, reference book (encyclopedia, etc.), newspapers, magazines, weekly readers
Student writing	Student writing (more than words or disconnected sentences) is being used
Board/chart	Board chart or card is being used (e.g., blackboard, pocket chart, hanging chart, flashcards)
Worksheet	Worksheet, workbook page, sheet of paper, individual whiteboards for one-word or one-sentence
Electronic technology	Computers, iPad, or other electronic technology
Other/NA	None of the above or other
6 - Teacher Interaction	
Telling	Telling or giving children information, explaining
Modeling	Showing/demonstrating the steps of how to do something or how to do a process (not explaining)
Recitation	Engaging students in answering questions or responding, usually low level q-a-q-a
Coaching/Scaffolding	Prompting/providing support which will transfer to other situations
Listening/watching	Listening or watching and giving feedback as students are engaged in activity
Reading aloud	Teacher is reading aloud to students
Assessment	Engaging in questioning/explaining/providing of directions for the purpose of assessing students
Discussion	Students engaged in a discussion which may or may not be led by the teacher, formal conventions of discussion
Other/NA	None of the above or other
7 - Expected Pupil Response	

Reading	Students are to be reading or chorally
Reading turn-taking	Students in group are to be reading turn-taking
Orally responding	Students expected to orally respond – when there is choral responding, partners share ideas or respond together
Oral turn-taking	Students in a group wait to be called on or wait to take turns to orally respond
Listening	Students are to be listening (e.g., when teacher is telling information)
Writing	Students are to be writing words, sentences, or paragraphs
Manipulating	Students are to be manipulating, using their hands (other than writing). Includes electronic technology
Other/NA	None of the above or other

Appendix F

Description of Field Observer Training

Observations were completed by three trained research assistants to identify the type of classroom instruction provided to the focal students. Training consisted of a 2-day orientation for the three field observers to the coding scheme. Prior to the training, field observers were instructed to read “Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read” (National Institute for Literacy, 2001) related to basic background information in reading instruction and Barbara Taylor’s (2004) work related to the coding scheme and observation procedures. Training included instruction in taking field notes with opportunities to practice and receive feedback. Field observers then participated in direct instruction in the observation codes which included opportunities for discussion, possible examples, as well as watching the video examples provided in the training manual. Field observers then watched the video examples provided in the training manual, compared codes with the manual, and discussed differences and coding rationale. After practicing with two videos (one kindergarten level and one third grade level), field observers watched and coded eight video segments (approximately 5-minutes each) and compared codes with the manual to calculate interrater reliability for each individual field observer. Reliability was calculated by each level of codes (seven total). Field observers had to reach 80% or better mastery in comparison to the answer key to be considered having reached acceptable reliability. During the first round, 80% reliability was not reached. Following the instructions in the manual, field observers met again (one-week following the initial training) to further discuss the codes and complete the inter-rater reliability videos in a second round. Reliability was met (Table F1).

Table F1

Interrater Reliability By Level Across Raters

Level:	Percentage:
1 – Who	90.67%
2 – Grouping	95.33%
3 – Major Focus	92.3%
4 – Activity	91.67%
5 – Material	98%
6 – Teacher Interaction	88%
7 – Expected Pupil Response	94%

Appendix G

Classroom Observation Coding Results from Entire Sample

Table G1 provides the descriptive information of the average percentage of observed time spent at each code for the whole sample of observations. By level, the most frequent or highest percentage of time observed at each level of codes were: who – classroom teacher (91%), grouping – small group (75%), focus – reading (77%), activity – reading connected text (55%), material – narrative text (53%), teacher interaction – telling (59%), and student response – listening (61%).

Table G1

Classroom Observation Results by the Whole Sample

Observation Variable	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Who				
Classroom Teacher	0%	100%	49%	49%
Specialist	0%	100%	43%	48%
Aid	0	100%	11%	26%
No One	0%	14%	.5%	2%
N/A	0%	14%	1%	3%
Grouping				
Whole Class	0%	100%	29%	35%
Small Group	0%	100%	60%	39%
Pairs	0%	71%	12%	19%
Individual	0%	83%	14%	25%
Other	0%	29%	2%	6%
Focus				
Reading	31%	100%	77%	19%
Composite	00%	67%	7%	15%
Other Language	0%	59%	11%	16%
Other Focus	0%	38%	13%	11%
Activity				
Reading Connected Text	0%	100%	52%	23%
Listening	0%	80%	23%	25%
Vocabulary	0%	71%	14%	17%
Meaning of Text				
Talk low	0%	100%	30%	25%
Write low	0%	67%	9%	14%
Talk high	0%	57%	12%	15%
Write high	0%	40%	3%	9%
Comprehension	0%	83%	24%	25%
Comprehension Strategy	0%	67%	7%	15%

Writing	0%	67%	9%	18%
Word Identification	0%	80%	11%	17%
Sight Words	0%	20%	.5%	3%
Phonics	0%	100%	10%	20%
Word Recognition	0%	17%	4%	6%
Letter Identification	0%	20%	1%	4%
Spelling	0%	31%	7%	10%
Other	0%	75%	18%	18%
Material				
Narrative Text	0%	100%	42%	33%
Informational Text	0%	80%	7%	18%
Student writing	0%	67%	6%	13%
Board	0%	67%	12%	18%
Worksheet	0%	100%	31%	30%
Electronic/Technology	0%	71%	18%	23%
Other	0%	35%	10%	10%
Teacher Interaction				
Telling	0%	100%	57%	29%
Modeling	0%	33%	5%	9%
Recitation	0%	100%	42%	27%
Coaching	0%	86%	21%	24%
Listening	0%	100%	59%	25%
Reading Aloud	0%	71%	7%	13%
Assessment	0%	50%	5%	11%
Discussion	0%	33%	4%	9%
Other	0%	93%	14%	19%
Student Response				
Reading	0%	100%	30%	30%
Reading Turn-Taking	0%	86%	23%	26%
Orally Responding	0%	100%	20%	27%
Oral Turn-Taking	0%	100%	39%	29%
Listening	0%	100%	60%	28%
Writing	0%	100%	31%	28%
Manipulating	0%	80%	10%	17%
Other	0%	42%	9%	12%

N/A: SD was not calculated because there was only one observed teacher at this code.

Appendix H

Comparison of All Observation Codes

Table H1

Comparison of Observation Codes for RTA Classroom, Regular Classroom and the Whole Sample

Observation Variable	Whole Sample M (SD)	RTA Teacher M (SD)	Classroom Teacher M (SD)
Who			
Classroom Teacher***	49% (48%)	6% (24%)	80% (35%)
Specialist***	43% (48%)	78% (43%)	18% (35%)
Aid	11% (26%)	16% (37%)	8% (16%)
No One	1% (3%)	0%	1% (3%)
N/A	1% (3%)	1% (3%)	1% (3%)
Grouping			
Whole Class***	29% (35%)	0%	49% (32%)
Small Group***	60% (39%)	92% (14%)	37% (35%)
Pairs	12% (19%)	8% (19%)	15% (19%)
Individual	14% (25%)	9% (20%)	18% (27%)
Other	2% (6%)	3% (8%)	2% (4%)
Focus			
Reading*	77% (19%)	84% (18%)	72% (18%)
Writing	7% (15%)	7% (18%)	7% (14%)
Other Language**	11% (16%)	2% (10%)	17% (17%)
Other Focus	13% (11%)	9% (11%)	15% (11%)
Activity			
Reading Connected Text	52% (23%)	61% (26%)	47% (20%)
Listening	23% (26%)	30% (33%)	19% (18%)
Vocabulary	14% (17%)	17% (20%)	12% (14%)
Meaning of Text			
Talk Low*	30% (25%)	42% (26%)	23% (21%)
Write Low	9% (14%)	11% (14%)	8% (14%)
Talk High*	12% (15%)	20% (20%)	6% (7%)
Write High	3% (9%)	2% (8%)	3% (9%)
Comprehension	24% (25%)	31% (27%)	18% (22%)
Comprehension Strategies	7% (15%)	7% (14%)	7% (15%)
Writing	9% (18%)	7% (18%)	11% (18%)
Word Identification	11% (17%)	15% (19%)	7% (15%)
Sight Words	1% (3%)	0%	1% (4%)
Phonics	10% (20%)	11% (17%)	10% (22%)
Word Recognition	4% (6%)	5% (7%)	2% (5%)
Letter Identification	1% (4%)	1% (5%)	1% (4%)
Spelling	7% (10%)	5% (9%)	8% (11%)
Other*	18% (18%)	10% (9%)	24% (20%)
Material			
Narrative Text*	42% (33%)	58% (38%)	31% (24%)
Informational Text	7% (18%)	8% (18%)	7% (18%)
Student Writing	6% (13%)	8% (18%)	5% (8%)

Board	12% (18%)	11% (19%)	12% (18%)
Work Sheet	31% (30%)	23% (31%)	36% (29%)
Electronic/Technology***	18% (23%)	3% (11%)	28% (23%)
Other	10% (11%)	7% (10%)	12% (11%)
Teacher Interaction			
Telling	57% (29%)	59% (30%)	56% (28%)
Modeling	5% (9%)	5% (11%)	6% (9%)
Recitation	42% (27%)	50% (32%)	37% (23%)
Coaching	21% (24%)	26% (28%)	17% (21%)
Listening	59% (25%)	62% (26%)	57% (25%)
Reading Aloud	7% (13%)	7% (18%)	7% (9%)
Assessment	5% (11%)	5% (12%)	4% (10%)
Discussion	4% (9%)	5% (9%)	3% (9%)
Other	14% (19%)	10% (12%)	16% (22%)
Student Response			
Reading	30% (30%)	22% (32%)	35% (28%)
Reading, Turn-Taking***	23% (26%)	40% (29%)	11% (16%)
Orally Responding*	20% (27%)	32% (35%)	12% (14%)
Oral Turn-Taking	39% (30%)	42% (35%)	36% (26%)
Listening	60% (29%)	59% (29%)	60% (29%)
Writing*	31% (28%)	21% (28%)	38% (27%)
Manipulating	10% (17%)	5% (19%)	14% (15%)
Other	9% (12%)	5% (10%)	12% (13%)

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

N/A: SD was not calculated because there was only one teacher observed at this code.

Appendix I
RTA Parent Survey

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

1. I have observed an improvement in my child's ability to read independently this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

2. I have observed an improvement in my child's ability to read homework assignments this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

3. I have observed an improvement in my child's class work this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

4. I have observed an improvement in my child's motivation to read this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

5. I have observed an improvement in my child's enjoyment in reading this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

6. I have observed an improvement in my child's confidence in her/his ability to read this year.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

7. My child's reading intervention program has improved his/her reading performance.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Comments (optional):

8. My child's reading intervention program has improved his/her reading motivation.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Comments (optional):

9. My child's reading intervention program has improved his/her reading enjoyment.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Comments (optional):

10. My child's classroom teacher sends things home for me to work on with my child to help with his/her reading.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

11. My child's reading intervention teacher sends things home for me to work on with my child to help with his/her reading.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

12. My child's school provides me with information about how I can help support my child at home with reading.

1 *2* *3* *4*
Strongly Disagree *Disagree* *Agree* *Strongly Agree*

Please circle the response that best describes your experiences *this year* with your child's school:

13. My child's school provided literacy events in which parents could actively participate with their children.

Yes *No*

14. My child's school has included me in decisions about my child's reading intervention program.

Yes *No*

If yes, please explain how you were included:

15. How frequently have you had meetings with your child's intervention teacher?

Never *Twice a Year* *Once a Month* *Once a Week* *More than once a week*

16. How frequently does your school provide opportunities for you to communicate with them?

Never *Twice a Year* *Once a Month* *Once a Week* *More than once a week*

17. What grade is your child currently in?

K *first* *second* *third*

18. Please share anything else you would like us to know about you or your child's experiences related to his/her reading intervention program:

Appendix J

Academic Rating Scale (First Grade)

You are asked to rate the child's skills, knowledge, and behaviors within each of these three areas based on your experience with this child. This is NOT a test and should not be administered directly to the child. Each question includes examples that are meant to help you think of the range of situation in which the child may demonstrate similar skills and behaviors.

The examples do not exhaust all the ways that a child may demonstrate what he/she knows or can do.

The following **five-point scale** is used for each of the questions. It reflects the degree to which a child has acquired and/or chooses to demonstrate the targeted skills, knowledge, and behaviors.

- 1 = Not yet → Child has not yet demonstrated skill, knowledge, or behavior.
- 2 = Beginning → Child is just beginning to demonstrate skill, knowledge, or behavior but does so very inconsistently.
- 3 = In progress → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with some regularity but varies in level of competence.
- 4 = Intermediate → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with increasing regularity and average competence but is not completely proficient.
- 5 = Proficient → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior competently and consistently.
- N/A = Not Applicable → Skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in classroom setting.

Rate only the child's **current** achievement or motivation. Rate each child compared to other children of the same age level. Please use the full range of ratings. If the skill, knowledge, or behavior has been introduced in the classroom, please rate the child using the numbers **1-5**. Circle "**NA**" only if the skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in your classroom setting.

Children with Limited English Proficiency: Please answer the questions based on your knowledge of this child's skills. If the child does not yet demonstrate skills in English but does demonstrate them in his/her native language, please answer the questions with the child's native language in mind.

Children with Special Needs: It may be necessary to consider adaptations for some questions to make them more inclusive for this child's skills and/or use of adaptive equipment. Some children may utilize alternative forms of verbal communication (e.g., sign language, communication boards) or written communication (e.g., word processors, Braille, dictation). Please answer the questions with these adaptations in mind.

THIS CHILD.....	CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ITEM					
	Not Yet	Beginning	In progress	Intermediate	Proficient	N/A
Contributes relevant information to classroom discussions – for example, during a class discussion, can express an idea or a personal opinion on a topic and the reasons behind the opinion	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Understands and interprets a story or other text read to him/her – for example, by writing a sequel to a story, or dramatizing part of a story, or posing a question about why a particular story event occurred as it did	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads words with regular vowel sounds – for example, reads "coat", "junk", "lent", "chimp", "halt", or "bite."	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads words with irregular vowel sounds – for example, reads "through," "point," "enough," or "shower."	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Reads first grade books independently with comprehension – for example, reads most words correctly and answers questions about what was read, make predictions while reading, and retells story after reading	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads first grade books fluently – for example, easily reads words in meaningful phrases rather than reading word by word	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Composes a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Demonstrates an understanding of some of the conventions of print – for example, appropriately using question marks, exclamation points, and quotation marks	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Uses the computer for a variety of purposes – for example by writing a page for a class book, or looking up information on a topic of interest, or solving math problems, or recording a scientific observation	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Academic Rating Scale (Second Grade)

You are asked to rate the child's skills, knowledge, and behaviors within each of these three areas based on your experience with this child. This is NOT a test and should not be administered directly to the child. Each question includes examples that are meant to help you think of the range of situation in which the child may demonstrate similar skills and behaviors.

The examples do not exhaust all the ways that a child may demonstrate what he/she knows or can do.

The following **five-point scale** is used for each of the questions. It reflects the degree to which a child has acquired and/or chooses to demonstrate the targeted skills, knowledge, and behaviors.

- 1 = Not yet → Child has not yet demonstrated skill, knowledge, or behavior.
- 2 = Beginning → Child is just beginning to demonstrate skill, knowledge, or behavior but does so very inconsistently.
- 3 = In progress → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with some regularity but varies in level of competence.
- 4 = Intermediate → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with increasing regularity and average competence but is not completely proficient.
- 5 = Proficient → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior competently and consistently.
- N/A = Not Applicable → Skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in classroom setting.

Rate only the child's **current** achievement or motivation. Rate each child compared to other children of the same age level. Please use the full range of ratings. If the skill, knowledge, or behavior has been introduced in the classroom, please rate the child using the numbers **1-5**. Circle "**NA**" only if the skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in your classroom setting.

Children with Limited English Proficiency: Please answer the questions based on your knowledge of this child's skills. If the child does not yet demonstrate skills in English but does demonstrate them in his/her native language, please answer the questions with the child's native language in mind.

Children with Special Needs: It may be necessary to consider adaptations for some questions to make them more inclusive for this child's skills and/or use of adaptive equipment. Some children may utilize alternative forms of verbal communication (e.g., sign language, communication boards) or written communication (e.g., word processors, Braille, dictation). Please answer the questions with these adaptations in mind.

THIS CHILD.....	CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ITEM					
	Not Yet	Beginning	In progress	Intermediate	Proficient	N/A
Conveys ideas clearly when speaking –for example, presents a well-organized oral report, or uses precise language to express opinions, feelings, and ideas, or provides relevant answers to questions that summarize classmate’s concerns	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Uses various strategies to gain information – for example, uses the index or table of contents to locate information, or uses other reference books/media/internet to learn about a topic	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads fluently – for example, easily reads words as part of meaningful phrases rather than word by word including words with three or more syllables, such as suggestion, monument, or powerful.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads second grade books (fiction) independently with comprehension – for example, relates why something happened in a story, or identifies emotions of characters in a story, or identifies a turning point in the story	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads and comprehends expository text – for example, uses information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters,	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

setting or play or compares and contrasts two or more version of the same story (e.g. Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.						
With guidance and support from adults and peers, composes multi-paragraph stories/reports – for example, writes a report by developing and following an outline, or writes stories with a clear plot and distinct characters	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Rereads and reflects on writing, making changes to clarify or elaborate – for example, adds more adjectives and description, or includes additional details to increase clarity, or combines choppy sentences	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Makes mechanical corrections when reviewing a rough draft – for example, rereads a story and adds omitted words, or correct spelling and capitalization errors, or adds end punctuation when necessary	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Uses the computer for a variety of purposes – for example, to write reports or stories formatting them correctly, or to use a database to retrieve information or digital text	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Academic Rating Scale (Third Grade)

You are asked to rate the child's skills, knowledge, and behaviors within each of these three areas based on your experience with this child. This is NOT a test and should not be administered directly to the child. Each question includes examples that are meant to help you think of the range of situation in which the child may demonstrate similar skills and behaviors.

The examples do not exhaust all the ways that a child may demonstrate what he/she knows or can do.

The following **five-point scale** is used for each of the questions. It reflects the degree to which a child has acquired and/or chooses to demonstrate the targeted skills, knowledge, and behaviors.

- 1 = Not yet → Child has not yet demonstrated skill, knowledge, or behavior.
- 2 = Beginning → Child is just beginning to demonstrate skill, knowledge, or behavior but does so very inconsistently.
- 3 = In progress → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with some regularity but varies in level of competence.
- 4 = Intermediate → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior with increasing regularity and average competence but is not completely proficient.
- 5 = Proficient → Child demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior competently and consistently.
- N/A = Not Applicable → Skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in classroom setting.

Rate only the child's **current** achievement or motivation. Rate each child compared to other children of the same age level. Please use the full range of ratings. If the skill, knowledge, or behavior has been introduced in the classroom, please rate the child using the numbers **1-5**. Circle "**NA**" only if the skill, knowledge, or behavior has not been introduced in your classroom setting.

Children with Limited English Proficiency: Please answer the questions based on your knowledge of this child's skills. If the child does not yet demonstrate skills in English but does demonstrate them in his/her native language, please answer the questions with the child's native language in mind.

Children with Special Needs: It may be necessary to consider adaptations for some questions to make them more inclusive for this child's skills and/or use of adaptive equipment. Some children may utilize alternative forms of verbal communication (e.g., sign language, communication boards) or written communication (e.g., word processors, Braille, dictation). Please answer the questions with these adaptations in mind.

THIS CHILD.....	CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH ITEM					
	Not Yet	Beginning	In progress	Intermediate	Proficient	N/A
Conveys ideas clearly when speaking – for example, presents a well-organized oral report, or uses precise language to express opinions, feelings, and ideas, or provides relevant answers to questions that summarize classmate’s concerns	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Uses various strategies to gain information – for example, uses the index or table of contents to locate information, or uses encyclopedias or other reference books/media to learn about a topic	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads fluently – for example, easily reads words as part of meaningful phrases rather than word by word including words with three or more syllables, such as rambunctious, residential, genuinely, and pneumonia	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads third grade books (fiction) independently with comprehension –for example, relates why something happened in a story, or identifies emotions of characters in a story, or identifies a turning point in the story	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Reads and comprehends expository text – for example, after reading about how early colonists lived, creates a chart comparing life today with colonial life, or after reading a children’s news	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

story about pollution, identifies cause and effect relationships, or summarizes main ideas and the supporting details in a science or social studies selection						
Composes multi-paragraph stories/reports – for example, writes a report by developing and following an outline, or writes stories with a clear plot and distinct characters	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Rereads and reflects on writing, making changes to clarify or elaborate – for example, adds more adjectives and description, or includes additional details to increase clarity, or combines choppy sentences	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Makes mechanical corrections when reviewing a rough draft – for example, rereads a story and adds omitted words, or correct spelling and capitalization errors, or adds end punctuation when necessary	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Uses the computer for a variety of purposes – for example, to write reports or stories formatting them correctly, or to use a database to retrieve information	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Appendix K

Teacher Interview Scoring Rubric

1. How does the school approach screening students?			
0 = School does not have a systematic processes for screening students who are at elevated risk of developing reading disabilities.	1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel related to screening or screening is inconsistent across grades. School reports screening students at EITHER the beginning or middle of the year. No monitoring students at risk.	2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel that screening occurs across. School reports screening students at the beginning and middle of the year but doesn't regularly monitor the progress of students who are at elevated risk for developing reading disabilities	3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel that screening occurs for all primary grades. School reports screening students at the beginning and middle of the year and regularly monitors the progress of students who are at elevated risk for developing reading disabilities
2. How does the school approach differentiated instruction?			
0 = School reports no use of differentiated instruction.	1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel of differentiated instruction and/or differentiation occurs in just one grade or only for students at risk or requiring special education services.	2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel of differentiated instruction. Differentiation occurs across most grades. School reports providing differentiated reading instruction for all students based on assessment data (tier 1) including varying	3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of differentiated instruction. School reports providing differentiated reading instruction for all students based on assessment data (tier 1) including varying time, content, and degree of

		<p>time, content, and degree of support and scaffolding—</p> <p>There are data-driven decision rules for providing differentiated instruction to students at varied reading proficiency levels for part of the day. Classroom teachers know how to collect and interpret student data on reading efficiently and reliably.</p> <p>decision rules for providing differentiated instruction to students at varied reading proficiency levels for part of the day. Classroom Teachers know how to collect and interpret student data on reading efficiently and reliably.</p>	<p>support and scaffolding—</p> <p>There are data-driven decision rules for providing differentiated instruction to students at varied reading proficiency levels for part of the day. Classroom teachers know how to collect and interpret student data on reading efficiently and reliably.</p>
<p>3. How does the school approach systematic instruction for students below the benchmark on universal screening?</p>			

<p>0 = School reports no instruction on foundational reading skills in small groups or individuals to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening.</p>	<p>1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel of systematic instruction or instruction is available at just one grade. School reports providing instruction on foundational reading skills in small groups/individuals to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening, however, instruction is not systematic in intensive.</p>	<p>2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel and across most primary grades of systematic instruction. School reports providing systematic instruction on up to three foundational reading skills in small groups/individuals to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening. These groups meet less than 3 times a week for 20-40 minutes (tier 2).</p>	<p>3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of systematic instruction. School reports providing intensive, systematic instruction on up to three foundational reading skills in small groups/individuals to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening. These groups meet between three and five times a week for 20-40 minutes (tier 2).</p>
<p>4. How does the school approach monitoring the progress of tier 2 students?</p>			
<p>0 = School doesn't report monitoring the progress of tier 2 students.</p>	<p>1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel and grades (i.e. just one grade) of progress monitoring of Tier 2 students. School reports monitoring the progress of tier 2 students at least once a year and uses this data to determine whether students still require intervention.</p>	<p>2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel and/or for most primary grades of progress monitoring of Tier 2 students. School reports monitoring the progress of tier 2 students at least three times a year and uses this data to determine whether students still require intervention. For those students still making insufficient progress,</p>	<p>3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of progress monitoring of Tier 2 students. School reports monitoring the progress of tier 2 students at least once a month and uses this data to determine whether students still require intervention. For those students still making insufficient progress, teams design a tier 3 intervention plan.</p>

		teams design a tier 3 intervention plan.	
5. How does the school approach intensive instruction for students who show minimal progress following time in tier 2 small group instruction (tier 3)?			
0 = School does not report providing intensive instruction that promotes the development of various components of reading proficiency to students who show minimal progress after reasonable time in tier 2 small group instruction (tier 3).	1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel and/or grades (i.e. just one grade) of intensive instruction for students showing minimal progress. School reports providing intensive instruction on a monthly basis that promotes the development of various components of reading proficiency to students who show minimal progress after reasonable time in tier 2 small group instruction (tier 3).	2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel and/or across most grades of intensive instruction for students showing minimal progress. School reports providing intensive instruction on a weekly basis that promotes the development of various components of reading proficiency to students who show minimal progress after reasonable time in tier 2 small group instruction (tier 3).	3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of intensive instruction for students showing minimal progress. School reports providing intensive instruction on a daily basis that promotes the development of various components of reading proficiency to students who show minimal progress after reasonable time in tier 2 small group instruction (tier 3). This includes concentrated instruction, adjusted lesson place, intensive lessons that provide opportunities to practices and is individualized to

			the needs of the student.
6. How does the school approach parental involvement in intervention planning, and student progress?			
0 = School does not report any successful means of parent communication or involvement related to students' reading progress.	1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel and grades (i.e. one grade) of parental involvement. School reports contacting parents primarily through letters/emails but does not attempt further communication or provide opportunities for additional contact.	2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel and/or most grades of parental involvement: school reports initiating parent contact through more than one of means (e.g., parent notes/emails, phone calls, conferences), holds regularly scheduled parent conferences, and informs parents of intervention plans and student progress.	3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of parental involvement. School reports initiating parent contact through multiple means (parent notes/email, phone calls, conferences), holds regularly scheduled parent conferences, and actively involves parents in the intervention plans and student progress. Parents' input is sought regarding decision making about students' placement in interventions; progress-monitoring information is shared with parents regularly. Strategies are in place to help parents support literacy through home activities
7. How involved are teachers and administrators in the school in literacy leadership activities?			

<p>0 = School reports no active literacy committees, activities, or school-wide support for literacy.</p>	<p>1 = There is inconsistent evidence across school personnel and/or grades of leadership activities. School reports minimal involvement in literacy committees, promoting school awareness of literacy events, and support.</p>	<p>2 = There is somewhat consistent evidence across school personnel and/or across most grades of leadership activities. School reports that teachers and administration are involved (in some capacity) in literacy committees, promote school awareness of literacy events, and provide each other support. Additionally, teachers report adequate support from administration in completing their instructional duties (e.g., are not requested to do additional school duties).</p>	<p>3 = There is consistent evidence across school personnel and grades of leadership activities. School reports that teachers and administration are actively involved in literacy committees, promote school awareness of literacy events, and provide each other support. Additionally, teachers report ample support from administration in carrying out response to intervention components. There is an active literacy team that makes decisions about the school's system for interventions.</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

