



Read to Achieve

Diagnostic and Intervention Services

Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve Program

2010-2011 Report

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EVALUATION OF KENTUCKY'S READ TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM

2010-2011 REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Kentucky Read to Achieve (KY RTA) Program was created in 2005 under Senate Bill 19 with the goal of supporting schools in implementing a reading diagnostic and intervention program to provide support for struggling readers in grades K- 3. The focus was on early identification and intervention in order to improve future success.

The RTA program can be found in 324 elementary schools in the state. Individual schools apply to the Kentucky Department of Education for a grant, requesting funds to implement an RTA program at the site. The number of schools receiving RTA grants has grown since the program's inception with 101 schools in the first round of grants in 2005-06 and 324 schools currently funded in 2010-11. Six schools opted out of the grant after participating for one or more years. Several schools closed and/or merged with other schools in the district. Some districts have only a single school participating, other districts have several or all of their elementary schools.

The RTA application allows choice in the intervention programs which participating schools may select, but several aspects of program implementation are required and therefore common across participating schools. The common, required elements include:

- Hiring highly trained reading intervention teacher(s).
- Using early reading intervention programs which offer short-term, intensive instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency.
- Participating in a variety of required professional development activities.

The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky was charged with creating and implementing a comprehensive research agenda to evaluate the impact of intervention programs on student achievement in reading for RTA participants. MGT of America, Inc. (MGT), was contracted by CCLD to conduct the comprehensive RTA evaluation study beginning in 2009-10 and continuing during the 2010-11 academic year.

The purpose of this report is to provide the background, methodology, and impact data for the 2010-11 implementation of the KY RTA project. The report is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1.0** provides background and the conceptual framework for the study.
- **Chapter 2.0** provides details on the methodology used for this study, including sample selection, protocol development, procedures, data collection, and design and analysis for the two areas of study: Program and Achievement.
- **Chapter 3.0** summarizes the methods and findings for the Program Study.

- **Chapter 4.0** summarizes the methods and findings for the Achievement Study.
- **Chapter 5.0** summarizes the findings from the 2010-11 study and includes recommendations for the RTA program.

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan, developed by MGT in collaboration with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development at the University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), used both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate two components of RTA: Program and Achievement.

The goals of the **Program Study** were to understand the characteristics of the RTA schools and how the RTA program connected to other systems of support for struggling readers. To gather this information, MGT reviewed KDE data to develop descriptive statistics regarding the differences between RTA and non-RTA schools. MGT also reviewed data collected from an electronic survey to explore the system of support for students and the commitment to the chosen intervention approaches or programs. MGT gathered data through a telephone survey conducted with the principal and the RTA teacher from a stratified random sample of 30 schools and follow-up site visits to six selected sites.

The goal of the **Achievement Study** was to understand to what extent students in the RTA program maintain or improve their reading performance over time. MGT reviewed the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) data from spring 2010 for students in grades 3 and 4 to identify RTA students and assess their reading performance compared to all students. MGT aligned the ITBS percentile ranks (NPR of Average Student Score: National Student Norms) to the state's targets (Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished) to define student performance. In addition, MGT gathered student reading achievement data on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests from the six site visit schools.

Findings and Recommendations

Findings and recommendations are reported for each study area based on the research questions defined.

PROGRAM STUDY

1.0 Program Study Questions

- 1.1 What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
- 1.2 What are the chosen intervention(s) and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?
- 1.3 Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

1.1 Characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools

MGT reviewed data on the 768 schools in the state that had one or more of the RTA grade levels of kindergarten to grade 3 for which complete data were available. The data reviewed included ethnicity, gender, program status, defined as membership in one or more of the groups – Free/Reduced Lunch (F/R), English Language Proficiency (EL), and Disability, and student achievement, as measured by the 2010 Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT). Based on the characteristics studied, there are more similarities than differences between RTA and non-RTA schools.

Findings and Recommendations:

- RTA schools have higher percentages of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (F/R) and slightly higher percentages of students who qualify for the English Language Proficiency (EL) program. Staff reported confidence working with students who qualify for Free or Reduced lunch (F/R) , but a large percentage of RTA staff indicated less confidence in meeting the needs of EL students.
 - **There should be a state-wide focus on supporting RTA teachers who are working with students who qualify for the English Language Proficiency program.**
- Student achievement is highest in schools that have been part of the RTA program for at least three years. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of this evaluation, but it is possible that early adopters of RTA already had high student achievement or had more staff for grant writing. This finding suggests that the RTA requirements—having highly trained intervention staff, using early reading intervention programs which offer short-term, intensive instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency, and participating in a variety of required professional development activities— have school-wide benefits, not just benefits for the students involved in the RTA program.
 - **Schools with existing RTA programs that meet any new program requirements should receive continued support and RTA initiatives should be added to new schools as funds become available.**
- The relationship between student achievement and poverty is not significantly different in RTA and non-RTA schools. MGT plotted the data sets for RTA and non-RTA schools, comparing the percent of students who qualify for F/R lunch to the percent of students at the highest achievement levels. Neither correlation is strong. There is little difference between the two groups and there are both RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively low F/R populations and correspondingly low KCCT scores as well as RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively high F/R populations and high KCCT scores. Future RTA evaluations may benefit from further exploration of the RTA schools that appear to be exceeding expected performance compared to other schools. The schools with data points above the line of regression are beating the odds: they have high levels of student poverty and are still able to produce high levels of student achievement. There are, however, non-RTA schools with high

levels of poverty and relatively low levels of achievement which could benefit from an RTA program of support and intervention.

- **RTA should award RTA funding through grants based on need rather than through competitive grants.**

1.2 Chosen Interventions

MGT reviewed the intervention(s) chosen by the schools. The planned interventions were identified when the school initiated the RTA application and are expected to be used each year of the grant. For some schools, this choice of intervention program was seven years ago.

Findings and Recommendations:

- Twenty percent of the RTA schools report that they would like to consider a different intervention at one or more grade levels. Some schools chose the intervention program or materials seven years ago, and they are more informed consumers now. Other schools may have only recently selected a program, but are not seeing the improvement they had expected.
 - **RTA should develop a process for schools to provide a research or data-based request for a change in intervention program(s) as part of the grant renewal structure.**
- Some of the intervention programs used at the schools do not use materials that are aligned to state performance levels. Teachers and principals reported having no information whether what students were reading was at an appropriate level of difficulty.
 - **RTA should only approve grant applications that propose the use of intervention programs that include materials that are aligned to state performance levels to allow more effective monitoring of student progress.**

1.3 System of Support

MGT gathered data about the system of support for struggling readers at the RTA schools using an electronic survey, telephone interviews, and site visits.

Findings and Recommendations:

- Most schools reported having a system of support for struggling readers, but the most successful schools did not identify an RTA Team. In those schools, RTA is only one of several programs of support and they are more likely to talk about a literacy team or a data team. Student performance and improvement are responsibilities shared by everyone in the school, not just the RTA teacher.
 - **RTA should work closely with other intervention program areas at KDE (EL, Disability, etc.) to support the RTI structure so the progress of all students is monitored regularly.**

- It was reported that funding for the RTA program changes late in each budget year. It is hard to create a stable system of support when funding for important intervention programs – like RTA – is unpredictable from year to year.
 - **RTA should provide stability in funding for at least the biennial budget cycle to enable schools to adequately prepare and monitor programs.**

ACHIEVEMENT STUDY

2.0 Achievement Study Questions

- 2.1 To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?
- 2.2 For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

2.1 Maintaining or Improving Reading Performance - ITBS Data

For this part of the Achievement Study, MGT gathered data about the students who had received RTA support in grades 2 and/or 3 and measured their performance on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) administered in spring 2010, the latest year for which data are available. The goal was to see if students who had received RTA intervention in a previous grade(s) were able to read at a Proficient or Distinguished level when they reached grade 3 or grade 4.

This portion of the study does not report students who received interventions in grades K or 1 because the Kentucky Student Identification System (KSIS) was not fully implemented with individual student identification numbers until 2008-09 and this test data would not include them.

Findings and Recommendations:

- Students who received intervention only in second grade were more likely to perform at the Proficient or Distinguished levels than students who received intervention in either third grade or both second and third grades. The students who received intervention in only third grade were more likely to perform at higher levels than those who had two years of interventions (intervention in both second and third 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.
 - **RTA should continue to focus on early intervention and should require schools to provide interventions at all primary grades.**

2.2 Progress in Reading Achievement over One Year - MAP Data

MGT gathered the fall (or winter for kindergarten) and spring Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test data from the six site visit schools. The MAP test is being used in

142 of the RTA schools; some schools have used the MAP for six years, other schools only started using the MAP in the 2010-11 school year. The MAP data is presented as a RIT score, a scale that is continuous and equal-interval from K – 12. A student's RIT score can be equated to a percentile rank or compared to a grade level-specific RIT target score that enables staff, students, and families to know whether students are making progress. The MAP test is web-based and students receive their scores immediately.

Findings and Recommendations:

- The lowest achieving students are being served. The fall RIT scores for RTA students are lower than for the non-RTA students.
 - A majority of students are making progress and meeting standards. With the exception of grade 2, more than 50% of the RTA students met the RIT standard, based on the spring MAP test.
 - The gap between achieving and non-achieving students in grades K - 3 is narrowing. The kindergarten spring scores were nearly identical for both RTA and non-RTA students. The grade 3 students exceeded the NWEA Growth Estimate for the average initial starting RIT score.
- **RTA should request MAP scores from all RTA schools and use the assessment data to assess long-term trends in student achievement.**

Strengths and Limitations

The 2010-11 study was strengthened by the use of several types of data, including electronic surveys submitted by all 324 RTA schools and qualitative data. The personal interview data from the 30 telephone interview and the six site visit schools provided important first-person comments from RTA teachers and principals that supported the electronic and quantitative data.

The achievement portion of the study was strengthened by the support gathered from the six schools visited and staff at KDE. The student achievement data for the MAP test was provided directly by the staff at the six site visit schools or the district office. Having all the data in the same format and structure made the analysis more efficient and accurate. KDE program staff were able to provide detailed student demographic data for the English Language Proficiency and Disabled program areas and to facilitate the data transfers of the large testing and KSIS files.

The study was limited by the lack of complete and longitudinal data sets for the ITBS portion of the achievement study. The ITBS has only been used for two years, 2009-10 and 2010-11. However, the 2010-11 data are not available until late September and beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, MGT's analysis of student achievement includes only descriptive statistics since there is only one data point.

The Kentucky State Information System (KSIS) has only had individually-identifiable student numbers (SSID) since 2008-09. Although the RTA database contains information from earlier than this, the lack of SSID made it impossible to search for

records on students who had received support earlier than 2008-09. For the ITBS study, students may have received an RTA intervention in grade K or 1, but there were no records to connect them with the intervention.

MGT appreciates the efforts of the many program staff at the Kentucky Department of Education who researched and provided program information useful in the completion of this report. MGT appreciates the significant time investment of the 30 schools who agreed to be interviewed and the six who further agreed to a site visit.

**1.0 EVALUATION OF THE
KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE
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1.0 EVALUATION OF THE KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM

1.1 Program History

The Kentucky Read to Achieve (KY RTA) Program was created in 2005 under Senate Bill 19, with the goal of supporting schools in implementing a reading diagnostic and intervention program to provide assistance for struggling readers in grades K-3. The focus was on early identification and intervention in order to improve future success.

The RTA program can be found in 324 elementary schools in the state. Individual schools apply to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) for a grant, requesting funds to implement an RTA program at the site. The number of schools receiving RTA grants has more than doubled since the program's inception in 2005-06, from 101 schools funded in the first round of grants to the 324 schools funded in 2010-11. Six schools opted out of the grant after participating for one or more years. Several schools closed and/or merged with other schools in the district. Some districts have only a single school participating, while in other districts several or all elementary schools have implemented RTA. **Exhibit 1-1** provides information about the number of RTA participating schools and shows the change in number of schools since the program began in 2005-06.

EXHIBIT 1-1 RTA PROGRAM NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING 2005 - 2011

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
101	212	309	330	328	324

Source: KDE data compiled by MGT. 2011.

The RTA application allows choice in the intervention programs which participating schools may select, but several aspects of program implementation are required across all participating schools. The common, required elements include:

- Hiring highly trained reading intervention teacher(s).
- Using early reading intervention programs which offer short-term, intensive instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency.
- Participating in a variety of required professional development activities.

Participating schools also must closely monitor student performance and growth through both formative and summative assessments. The RTA teachers must report data on every student served, both those served directly by the RTA teacher and those served by other staff at the school. The student progress data is collected by KDE and will be used as part of this evaluation.

The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky was charged with creating and implementing a comprehensive research agenda to evaluate the impact of intervention programs on student achievement in reading for RTA participants. MGT of America, Inc. (MGT), was contracted by CCLD to conduct the comprehensive RTA evaluation study beginning in 2009-2010 and continuing during the 2010-11 academic year.

1.1.1 Prior KY RTA Evaluation Findings

The most recent 2009-2010 study conducted by MGT examined three aspects of the RTA program: implementation fidelity, student achievement impact, and cost. The study included data from electronic surveys, case studies, and KDE data bases containing district expenditure and RTA student reading performance information.

The implementation fidelity study found high levels of adherence to program expectations and fidelity in the classroom presentations. The case studies showed that the programs were being implemented and delivered with fidelity and that the teachers were relatively confident in their ability to provide appropriate instruction. The analyses did not provide clear direction or recommendation to suggest one program was more or less effective at narrowing the achievement gaps.

The impact study found that the benefits of RTA were most apparent in kindergarten and first grade, with gains for students in second and third grades being too small to be significant. The review of differences between student performance based on the intervention program being implemented did not provide consistent results. Additionally, the analysis of the impact of RTA and common interventions to reduce or eliminate achievement gaps among students with different characteristics failed to yield any consistent differences.

MGT also conducted a cost study to explore the impact of financial expenditures on student achievement. The analysis showed that most of the RTA expenditures were for personnel costs, rather than books or supplies, but that expenditures per student were not correlated to the change in test scores between fall and spring.¹

1.1.2 Supporting Reading Research

The KY RTA program and other initiatives designed to promote positive literacy outcomes for struggling readers are based on a wealth of research demonstrating that children with early reading difficulties are at risk for future poor educational and social outcomes. The research shows that early intervention and improvement can effectively disrupt this cycle. Children who enter school with limited reading-related skills are at high risk of being classified as disabled and requiring costly special education services in the future. In fact, learning disabilities related to language and reading development are the most frequently identified disabilities among students in public schools in the United States (Office of Special Education Programs, 1998, Lentz; 1988).

Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone's reading proficiency at the end of third grade

¹ 2009-2010 MGT Evaluation Report – Executive Summary p. v - vi.

(Slavin et al., 1994.)² A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school (Snow et al., 1998).³

Findings in the literacy field have also revealed gaps in literacy development among disadvantaged groups of children. For example, it has been found that failure to learn to read adequately is more likely among poor children, nonwhite children, and non-native speakers of English (Snow et al., 1998; Weatherby, 2000). Also, differences in literacy performance and growth in literacy abilities over time is linked to socioeconomic status (Clements, Reynolds, and Hickey, 2004).

A more recent development is the focus on not just early intervention, but appropriate intervention. Significant recent research has been focused on the importance of identifying struggling readers and providing them with instruction that increases in intensity and focus, dependent upon the student's response to that intervention. Much of this research has been aimed at reducing the number of students mis-identified as needing special education. It seems obvious that students' responses to intervention should have been monitored all along, but this approach of providing increasingly focused and targeted instruction has significantly altered the discussions in faculty rooms and improved the outlook for many children. The research surrounding the importance of creating a system or structure of support and paying attention to students' "response to intervention" has led many states, including Kentucky, to require schools to create building-wide RTI plans and systems.⁴

Although reading difficulties can have long-range effects on children's educational outcomes, research has also shown that intervening factors can improve reading abilities and ameliorate these effects. Use of evidence-based reading interventions; screening and progress monitoring and data-based decision making; professional development for interventionists, and strong administrative leadership have been linked to improving the literacy development of struggling readers (Greenwood, Kratochwill, & Clements, 2008). Additionally, evidence shows that early interventions such as those used in the RTA program can help close the gap between traditionally advantaged and disadvantaged student groups (Rodgers, Gomez-Bellenge, Wang, & Shulz, 2005).⁵

² Ibid., p. 21.

³ Ibid., p. 21.

⁴ <http://rti4success.org/progressMonitoringTools>

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

⁵ Rodgers, E. M., Gómez-Bellengé, F. X., Wang, C., & Schulz, M. (2005, April). *Predicting the literacy achievement of struggling readers: Does intervening early make a difference?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec. Available online at www.ndec.us.

1.2 Current Study Overview

MGT's 2010-11 evaluation addressed two study components: Program Study and Achievement Study. The Program Study examined the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, the commitment to the selected intervention(s), and the system of support for struggling readers that existed at the school. The data for this study came from the KDE-required program reports completed by the RTA staff at the schools, telephone interviews with selected schools, and site visits. The Achievement Study examined the reading achievement and progress of students served by RTA over time as measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). The data for this study came from the KDE. In addition, MGT reviewed the Fall to Spring reading performance data from the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test from a small group of schools selected for a site visit.

The key research questions addressed in this evaluation by study component are as follows:

1.2.1 Program Study Questions

1. What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
2. What are the chosen intervention(s), and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?
3. Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school, and how does RTA fit into that system?

1.2.2 Achievement Study Questions

1. To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?
2. For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

Given the research described earlier on the intervening factors that can improve reading and reduce the possibility of long-term academic difficulties, this study explored how RTA schools are:

- using evidence-based reading intervention(s);
- selecting students and monitoring progress; and
- using data to make decisions.

Attempts were made to specifically look at the RTA-funded interventions in terms of both the RTA program implementation and the impact on student achievement. Previous studies examined the fidelity of the implementation of the selected intervention. This study examines the continuing applicability of the selected intervention(s) and the monitoring of student learning through that intervention.

It is important to note that although RTA-funded intervention activities exist at all RTA schools, there are potentially many other sources and methods of intervention delivery that could also be occurring at the schools, and it is difficult to separate the impact of these non-RTA activities. Such activities may include:

- Use of intervention programs and materials not funded by RTA.
- Teaching by non-RTA-funded teacher(s).
- Multiple interventions.

Therefore, this study examines not only the RTA program, but also the system of support that surrounds struggling readers in RTA schools. These systems were often described by principals and teachers based on the Kentucky Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Although RTA schools are expected to have a “team” approach to support the grant, many schools have included RTA as part of their larger RTI model.

This study utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data to understand and evaluate the RTA program. A further goal is to provide some insights and/or recommendations that might guide the future development of RTA.

1.3 Evaluation Report Organization

This report includes five chapters. In addition to this chapter, which provides the conceptual framework for the studies, **Chapter 2.0** provides details on the study methodologies, including sample selection, procedures for developing interview protocols and electronic surveys, and approaches for data design and analysis. **Chapter 3.0** describes the Program Study, and includes comparison data for both RTA and non-RTA elementary schools in Kentucky. It also includes information gathered from the electronic surveys and telephone interviews. **Chapter 4.0** describes the Achievement Study and includes Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) student achievement data gathered from the KDE for students in third and fourth grades in all schools in the state and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data gathered from the six schools selected for a site visit. **Chapter 5.0** provides a description of strengths and limitations and a summary of the findings from each study. It also identifies implications for RTA and looks forward to future evaluation of the RTA project. The **Appendices** contain copies of all necessary protocols, technical information, and further information gathered about the use of the MAP test.

2.0 METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

2.0 METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

For this study, MGT used both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate two components of the Read to Achieve (RTA) program: Program and Achievement. The goals of the **Program Study** were to understand the characteristics of the RTA schools and how the RTA program connected to other systems of support for struggling readers. To gather this information, MGT reviewed Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) data to develop descriptive statistics regarding the differences between RTA and non-RTA schools. We collected electronic survey data from each site to explore the system of support for students and the commitment to the chosen intervention approach or program. MGT also gathered data through a telephone survey conducted with the principal and the RTA teacher from a stratified random sample of 30 schools and follow-up visits to six selected sites.

The goal of the **Achievement Study** was to understand the extent to which students in the RTA program maintain or improve their reading performance over time. MGT reviewed the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) data from spring 2010 for students in third and fourth grade to assess the reading performance of RTA students compared to non-RTA students and aligned the ITBS percentile ranks (PR of Average Student Score: National Student Norms) to the state's four-tier proficiency levels, Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished, to define student performance. Those students in the Novice and Apprentice categories have not yet met standards. Those students in the Proficient and Distinguished categories are considered meeting or exceeding standards. In addition, MGT gathered student reading achievement data on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests from the six site visit schools.

This chapter, presented in two sections, provides details regarding the methodologies used to gather and analyze data for the two study components for the 2010-11 RTA evaluation. **Section 2.1** describes the methodologies used to develop the **Program Study**. **Section 2.2** describes the methodologies used to develop the **Achievement Study**.

2.1 Program Study

The goal of the **Program Study** was to understand the RTA program from various perspectives, including a comparison to non-RTA schools.

The research questions for the **Program Study** are identified in **Section 2.1.1**. The approach and methodology for gathering data for each question are identified in **Section 2.1.2**.

2.1.1 Program Study Questions

1. What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
2. What are the chosen intervention(s) and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?

3. Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

2.1.2 Program Study Methodology

The Program Study examines various aspects of the RTA program, including the students, the interventions selected, and the overall program of support for struggling readers. MGT used data from the KDE, an electronic survey, and telephone and site visit information to examine the RTA program.

2.1.2.1 Characteristics of RTA and Non-RTA Schools

MGT gathered information from the KDE website to describe RTA and non-RTA schools. The schools reviewed included all of the schools in the state that included some or all grade levels from kindergarten through grade three, regardless of the grade configuration of the site. The grade configurations varied widely, including PK – 2 and PK – 12, but the majority of schools were PK (or K) – 5 or PK (or K) – 6. The data gathered included the following:

- Size of the schools – average and range
- Student demographics
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Free/Reduced Price Meal Status
 - Limited English Proficiency Status
 - Disability Status
- Student Achievement – percent of students scoring in each of the Kentucky achievement levels, Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished, as measured by the 2009 Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).

2.1.2.2 Chosen Interventions

MGT used data gathered from three sources to evaluate the intervention(s) chosen by each site and the staff commitment to maintaining the intervention(s): survey, telephone interviews, and site visits. All RTA schools responded to an electronic survey, 30 sites were selected through a stratified, random sample for telephone interviews, and six sites were selected for site visits. Data from all three sources were used to explore this question. Methodologies for the data areas are described below.

Electronic Survey

All RTA schools completed an online survey and report (Report III) in May 2011. The survey was developed by the KDE, and included questions requested by MGT for this evaluation. The KDE sent the survey link to all RTA teachers and completion of the report was identified as a grant requirement.

- Section 1 of the online survey had text boxes to allow RTA staff to describe the role of the principal and the role of the data coordinator in the RTA project.

Responses to this section will be used to answer questions about the system of support for struggling readers (see **Chapter 3, Section 3.3.**).

- Section 2 included questions about the number of students eligible for service, those successfully exited as of 4/15/11, and those currently receiving intervention services. This section was not used as part of this evaluation.
- Section 3 included a series of questions regarding the chosen intervention(s) used with each grade and the teacher's perception of efficacy. Respondents were asked to identify the number of students served and to rate the effectiveness of the chosen intervention(s). Space was provided to allow feedback about four interventions. Respondents were asked about the number of hours of training they received to implement the chosen intervention – both initial training and 2010-11 training. Respondents were asked to rate their own confidence level to improve learning among various groups of students and rate the effectiveness of the intervention(s). Responses to this section will be used to answer questions about the chosen intervention(s) (see **Chapter 3, Section 3.2.**).
- Section 4 included questions about program implementation. Respondents were asked to indicate the average period of time that students receive the chosen intervention(s) and to identify the tool(s) used to monitor student progress. This section was not used as part of this evaluation.
- Section 5 provided an opportunity for schools to identify other interventions provided to eligible students, but not delivered by the RTA-funded teacher. Space was provided to indicate the program(s) at each grade level, the number of students served, and the effectiveness of the intervention(s). This section was not used as part of this evaluation.
- Section 6 asked respondents to indicate if they would choose a different intervention and, if so, to identify the issues with their current intervention and the program characteristics of their preferred intervention. Responses to this section will be used to answer questions about the chosen intervention(s) (see **Chapter 3, Section 3.2.**).
- Section 7 asked questions about the RTA team at the site, including membership, activities, and meetings. Responses to this section will be used to answer questions about the chosen intervention(s) (see **Chapter 3, Section 3.3.**).
- Sections 8 and 9 asked about 2011-12 plans for the school and the RTA staff. This section was not used as part of this evaluation.

A copy of the Electronic Survey Report III is located in **Appendix A-1.**

Telephone Interviews

MGT conducted telephone interviews with the principal and RTA teacher at 30 sites. The sites were selected through a stratified random sampling process.

**EXHIBIT 2-2
RTA EVALUATION
TELEPHONE INTERVIEW SELECTION GRID**

	North	Central	East	West	Louisville
TOTAL Schools	15	38	33	42	14
Selected Schools	3	8	6	8	5

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2011.

- MGT used data from the 2000 national census to define a population density grouping for each school. Schools were identified as Level 1 – urban, Level 2 – suburban, or Level 3 – rural.
- The schools were listed alphabetically and then selected for a telephone interview based on a randomly generated number.

MGT contacted the schools selected for telephone interviews by e-mail to arrange for a convenient time for the phone call. In most cases, the principal and the RTA teacher were interviewed individually during two 30-minute time slots. At four schools, the principal and/or the teacher(s) requested a group interview. In most cases, the request was based on the relative newness of either individual or on scheduling difficulties. Telephone interviews were conducted during the first two weeks in April 2011.

Although the questions dealt with the same issues, the interview protocols were different for the two groups in an effort to gather both principal and teacher perspectives. The questions were provided to the RTA teacher and principal for their review prior to the interview. Interview protocols are provided in **Appendix B**.

Site Visits

MGT conducted site visits to six schools selected from the group of thirty telephone interview schools. The site visit school sample was selected as follows:

- The RTA-provided intervention(s) at each of the thirty telephone interview sites was identified. MGT set a goal of visiting two schools implementing each of the interventions identified in the 2009-10 study as most common: Early/Soar to Success (E/SS), Reading Mastery (RM), and Reading Recovery (RR). The fourth common intervention, Small Group Reading, was eliminated because of the lack of specificity in programmatic definitions.
- MGT maintained the geographic regions and the population density targets from the telephone interview site selection process.
- MGT used a random number generator to identify site visit schools in proportion to the total number of schools in the original sample of 142 schools using the MAP.

Exhibit 2-3 shows the number of sites selected for the site visits based on geographic area and population density. It also shows the intervention(s) implemented at the school(s) selected in each area: E/SS, RM, and RR.

**EXHIBIT 2-3
RTA EVALUATION
SITE VISIT SELECTION GRID**

	North	Central	East	West	Louisville
TOTAL Schools	15	38	33	42	14
Number Selected/Density	1 urban	2 urban, suburban	1 suburban	1 rural	1 suburban
Intervention(s)	E/SS	RM and RR E/SS and RR	RM and RR	RR	RM

MGT staff visited each site for one school day between May 9 and 16, 2011. During each site visit, MGT conducted the following activities:

- Observation of at least one 30-minute intervention session for each of the RTA interventions: Early/Soar to Success, Reading Mastery, and Reading Recovery.
- Interview or focus group with classroom teachers or members of the RTA team.
- MAP data discussion with principal/RTA teacher.
- School data discussion with principal and RTA teacher about data review tools, including a “data wall” or other site-developed tools.

2.1.2.3 System of Support for Struggling Readers

MGT used data gathered from three sources to understand the system of support in place to support struggling readers. The three data sources were the electronic survey of all RTA schools, the telephone interviews with 30 selected schools, and the site visits to six schools, selected as described in **Section 2.1.2.2, Chosen Interventions**.

The data and findings from the **Program Study** are described in **Chapter 3**.

2.2 Achievement Study

The goal of the **Achievement Study** was to understand the reading achievement of students who had received RTA intervention. MGT aimed to determine whether RTA students maintain or improve their reading performance over time. Finally, MGT examined the data available from the MAP assessment and explored the reading achievement gains over a school year at selected schools.

The research questions for the **Achievement Study** are identified in **Section 2.2.1**. The approach and methodology for gathering data for each question are identified in **Section 2.2.2**.

2.2.1 Achievement Study Questions

1. To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?
2. For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

2.2.2 Methodology

The Achievement Study examines student reading achievement. MGT used data from the ITBS administered state-wide in third and fourth grades in spring 2010 and data from the MAP test administered in selected schools in fall or winter and spring 2011.

2.2.2.1 Do RTA Students Maintain or Improve Reading Performance?

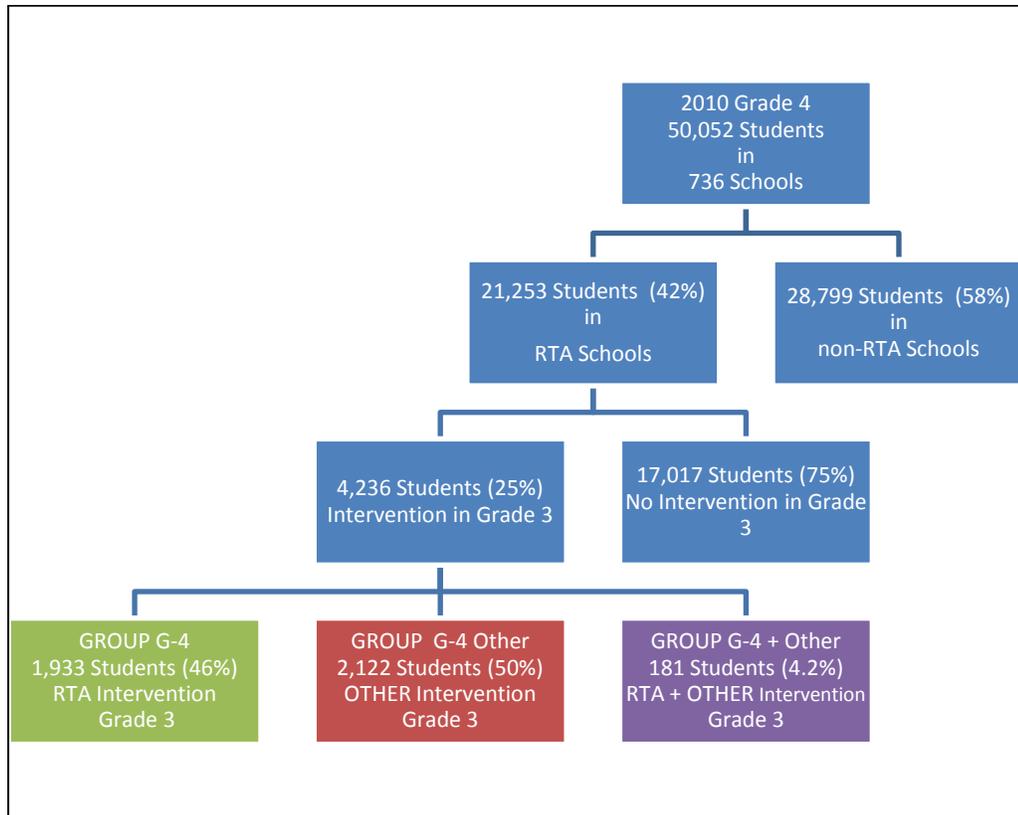
The goal of this area of study was to determine if students who had received RTA intervention services had become proficient readers, as measured by the ITBS administered at the end of 2010. MGT used the RTA student database to identify those students who met the following categories:

- Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2008-09 (ITBS in fourth grade, spring 2010). This group will be identified as **G-4**.
- Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2009-10 (ITBS in third grade, spring 2010). This group will be identified as **G-3**.
- Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2008-09 and an RTA intervention in third grade in 2009-10 (ITBS in third grade, spring 2010). This group will be identified as **G-3+2**.
- Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2008-09 (ITBS in third grade, spring 2010). This group will be identified as **G-2**.

Each of these major study groups was further divided by the three types of interventions that might have been provided. Students may have participated in RTA only (defined as being provided by the RTA-paid teacher), Other only (defined as some other intervention not provided by the RTA-paid teachers), or RTA + Other (defined as both an RTA teacher and some other intervention).

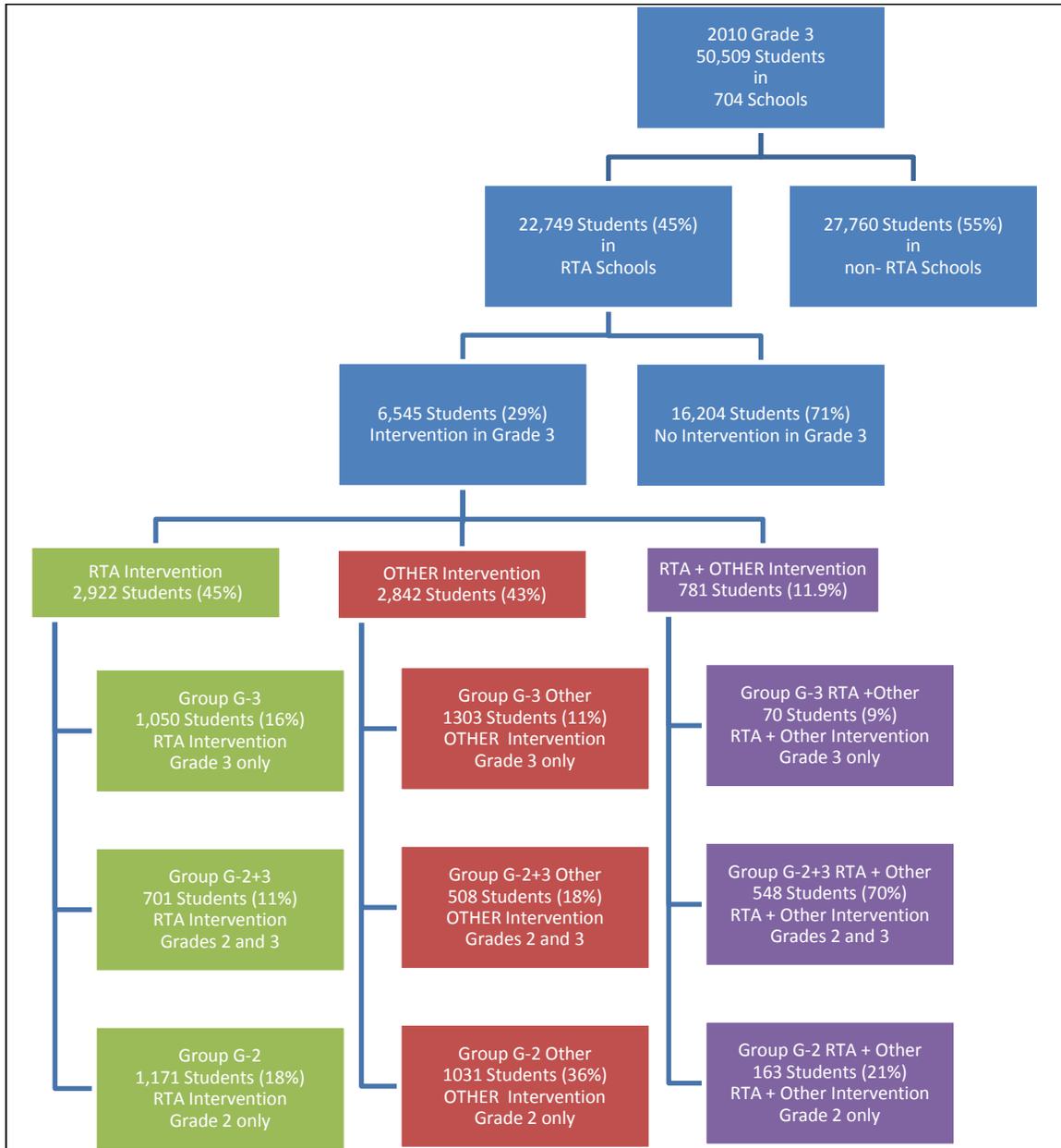
Exhibit 2-4 shows the structure of the data for students who took the ITBS test in fourth grade. **Exhibit 2-5** shows the structure of the data gathered and the groups identified for students who took the ITBS test in third grade.

**EXHIBIT 2-4
2010-11 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY GROUPS
GRADE 4 ITBS**



Source: Created by MGT.2011.

**EXHIBIT 2-4
2010-11 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY GROUPS
GRADE 3 ITBS**



Source: Created by MGT.2011.

MGT received the 2010 ITBS test file from KDE and matched students using the KDE system of student identification numbers (SSID). This data file was used to identify the demographics of the groups and to define the tested reading proficiency level of each group.

Kentucky uses a four-tier structure to describe proficiency: Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished (NAPD). Those students in the Novice and Apprentice

categories have not yet met standards. Those students in the Proficient and Distinguished categories are considered meeting or exceeding standards.

In order to define the ITBS student scores using this more familiar Kentucky system, MGT used information from a 2006 report to KDE by the Human Resources Research Organization reviewing the accuracy of student NAPD score classifications.¹ The report provided background for the selection of “cut points” for NAPD classifications based on the ITBS data. Based on the recommendations of the Human Resources Research Organization, MGT defined Novice as students who scored in the lowest 10 percent on the ITBS, Apprentice as the next 20 percent, Proficient as the next 60 percent, and Distinguished as the highest 10 percent.

There were limitations to the ITBS data, which were only available for 2009-10. Data for the 2010-11 school year will not be available until September 2011, beyond the scope of this evaluation. Therefore, the statistics presented in this chapter are descriptive, including number and percent of students in each category.

2.2.2.2 What is the Improvement in Reading over a School Year?

MGT gathered information about the use of the MAP assessment and described the fall (or winter) to spring progress of RTA students in the six site visit schools. The MAP assessment is used in 142 RTA schools. It is a product of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), a “non-profit organization working alongside member school districts to create a culture that values and uses data to improve instruction and student learning.”²

Data regarding the use of the MAP were gathered from the 30 telephone interview schools and from the six site visit schools. These data include how the MAP is used at the school, the grade levels involved, and the use of the data with students and families. A review and description of the use of the MAP test is located in **Appendix C**.

MGT received permission to access student MAP data from each of the six site visit schools/districts and was able to review data about all students and the number of RTA students who achieved targeted gains over the 2010-11 school year. The data describe the number and percent of students at each grade level, K – 3, who met an identified grade level RIT score target.

The data and findings from the **Achievement Study** are described in **Chapter 4**.

¹ <http://www.education.ky.gov/nr/rdonlyres/34e8e2dc-bc5a-47a1-ac5f-0b04b90acfd0/0/fr0681theaccuracyofstudentsnapdclassificationsforthe2006kcctandaugmentednormreferenc.pdf>

² www.nwea.org

3.0 PROGRAM STUDY

3.0 PROGRAM STUDY

The goal of the **Program Study** was to understand the RTA program and whether RTA schools have different characteristics than non-RTA elementary schools in Kentucky. This study also explored the chosen intervention program(s) and the school's commitment to continuing that intervention. The final question explored the role of RTA within the school and whether there was an overall system of support for struggling readers.

The research questions for the **Program Study** were identified in **Section 2.2.1**, as follows:

Program Study Questions

1. What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
2. What are the chosen intervention(s) and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?
3. Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

The methodologies and the data gathered to answer the program study questions were described in detail in **Chapter 2**. This chapter has five sections.

- **Section 3.1** reviews the common characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including both demographics and student achievement to see if there are differences that could inform the RTA program.
- **Section 3.2** explores the commitment to the intervention(s) chosen by the district and what other intervention models might be of interest.
- **Section 3.3** describes the overall system of support for struggling readers and how RTA fits into that system.
- **Section 3.4** outlines the findings relative to the RTA Program.
- **Section 3.5** describes the strengths and limitations of the Program Study.

3.1 Characteristics of RTA and Non-RTA Schools

In order to identify the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, MGT gathered student demographic and achievement data from the Kentucky schools that housed any grade levels from kindergarten to third grade. The data in **Exhibits 3-1** and **3-2** provide information about RTA schools and districts, including the location of participating districts across the state.

The RTA program has been available to schools in Kentucky for seven years, beginning with the first grants in 2005-06. As shown in **Exhibit 3-1**, the RTA intervention program started with 101 schools in 2005-06, added 113 schools in 2006-07 and another hundred schools in 2007-08, and currently has 324 schools. The slight differences from 2009-2011 are mainly the result of schools merging, but there have been a total of six schools that have dropped out of the program since its inception.

**EXHIBIT 3-1
NUMBER OF RTA PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS 2005-2011**

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
101	212	309	330	328	324

Source: KDE 2011.

The RTA grants are awarded to individual schools, not to districts. However, many districts have made system-wide decisions to apply for grants and implement the RTA program, i.e., Bell, Graves, and Madison Counties. As shown in **Exhibit 3-2**, the number of both districts and schools participating in RTA has increased since the start of the program. In 2005-06, 101 schools in 41 districts received grants and implemented the program. During 2010-11, there were 103 districts participating, 75 of the 120 county school districts and 28 of the 55 independent districts in the state.

**EXHIBIT 3-2
RTA DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS 2005-06 AND 2010-11**

	RTA Districts		RTA Schools	
	2005-06	2010-11	2005-06	2010-11
County Districts	32	75	84	288
Independent Districts	9	28	17	36
TOTAL	41	103	101	324

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2011 data.

The RTA program currently exists in all areas in the state, as shown in **Exhibit 3-3**. Districts that have participating schools are shown in green, although not all schools in that district may be participating. The counties with no RTA schools are shown in purple. Participating independent districts are shown with pink diamonds.

3.1.1 Grade Configuration

The study group included schools with thirty-three different grade configurations. As shown in **Exhibit 3-4**, most of the schools in this data set include kindergarten. There do not appear to be any patterns of difference between RTA and non-RTA schools based on grade configuration.

**EXHIBIT 3-4
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
MOST COMMON GRADE CONFIGURATIONS**

	Includes Kindergarten	Does Not Include Kindergarten
RTA Schools	302	12
Non-RTA Schools	421	32

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2010-11 data.

3.1.2 Size of Schools

MGT looked at the enrollment of the RTA and non-RTA schools to determine if there were significant differences. As shown in **Exhibit 3-5**, the average enrollment at non-RTA schools is slightly lower than the average enrollment at RTA schools (420 and 450, respectively). The size of the schools, as measured by enrollment, is not significantly different.

**EXHIBIT 3-5
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
ENROLLMENT**

RTA Status	Number of Schools	Average Enrollment	Range	
			Min.	Max.
RTA Schools	314	450	134	1,161
Non-RTA Schools	454	420	101	1,245
TOTAL	768			

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2010-11 data.

3.1.3 Demographics

Exhibits 3-6 through **3-7** provide school data based on several demographic categories: ethnicity, gender, and special program status—free/reduced lunch (F/R), English language proficiency (EL), and disability (D).

Exhibit 3-6 shows the ethnic distribution among the student population. As shown, the RTA schools have a larger proportion of White students and a smaller proportion of African American students. Overall, the ethnic differences between students attending RTA and non-RTA schools are very small.

**EXHIBIT 3-6
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
ETHNICITY**

RTA Status	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
RTA Schools	85.1%	8.0%	0.2%	1.0%	3.4%	2.3%
Non-RTA	81.6%	10.9%	0.1%	1.2%	3.3%	2.9%

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2009-10 data.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-7**, there is very little gender difference in RTA and non-RTA schools. However, both groups of schools have a higher percentage of males than females.

**EXHIBIT 3-7
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
GENDER**

RTA Status	Male	Female
RTA Schools	51.8%	48.2%
Non-RTA	52.4%	47.6%

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2009-10 data.

Although there are some minor differences between student populations based on ethnicity, and no difference based on gender, there appear to be somewhat greater differences between RTA and non-RTA schools in some of the other common categories used to describe schools.

Exhibit 3-8 shows the percent of the students who meet the requirements to qualify for three different programs:

- Qualification for **Free/Reduced Lunch** is based on documented family income data. All schools in Kentucky operate US Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved meal programs, but only eligible students are included in this count.
- Qualification for **Limited English Proficiency** is based on student assessments given annually by each school. Students who do not have adequate English skills are included in this count. Those who gain sufficient English skills are removed from this count.
- Qualification for **Students with Disabilities** is based on student assessments and criteria developed by the state. Students with a variety of disabilities, including speech, mobility, and multiple disabilities, are included in this count.

As shown, both the RTA and the non-RTA schools have a high percentage of students who qualify for Free/Reduced lunch, 65 percent and 63 percent respectively. However,

there is virtually no difference between RTA and non-RTA schools relative to the percent of students who qualify for Limited English Proficient or Disability status.

**EXHIBIT 3-8
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
FREE/REDUCED LUNCH STATUS, LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY STATUS,
DISABILITY STATUS**

RTA Status	Free/Reduced Lunch Status	Limited English Proficiency Status ¹	Disability Status
RTA	65.1%	3.3%	19.4%
Non-RTA	63.1%	3.2%	19.9%

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2009-10 data.

¹ The Limited English data is from fall 2010.

Many RTA schools reported their concerns about high poverty students and the need to have additional support as the rationale for completing a grant application. Comments included the following:

- “Our programs were like a toothpick in the dike compared to the needs. We had to do something different.”
- “It’s critical. We are changing the lives of children and their families. Struggling readers will need more support in the future if we don’t catch them early.”
- “We had a mandate from the superintendent to close the achievement gap for these students. There are higher expectations and a sense of urgency.”
- “The whole team, Title I, special education, and teachers, agreed we needed to do this.”
- “Title I could not fund full implementation of Reading Recovery, so we added RTA to get more support.”

3.1.4 Student Achievement

MGT used data from the KCCT to determine any differences in student achievement between RTA and non-RTA schools. **Exhibit 3-9** includes KCCT data from 2008 – 2010 for the 768 schools that had data available and housed any level from kindergarten to third grade. The KCCT is administered to all students in third through eighth grades.

As described in **Section 2.3.2**, Kentucky identifies student achievement using a four-tier system: Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished (NAPD). Students scoring in the Novice and Apprentice tiers are not yet at standard; those in the Proficient tier are at standard and those in the Distinguished tier are above standard. For this report, MGT has combined the two tiers representing students who have met or exceeded the target and scores will be represented by N = Novice, A= Apprentice, and P/D = Proficient or Distinguished.

Exhibit 3-9 displays the average percent of students in each tier for both RTA and non-RTA schools from 2008 through 2010 (because these are averages, the cells do not total 100% in any year). As shown, in 2008, RTA schools had an average 5.2% of the students in the Novice tier and had an average 74 percent of the students scoring in the Proficient/Distinguished tier. The average percent of students in each tier is not significantly different in RTA or non-RTA schools. However, the state averaged a slightly larger percent (5.9%) of students scoring in the Novice tier and a corresponding smaller percent (72.7%) of students scoring in the Proficient/ Distinguished tiers.

The data in **Exhibit 3-9** show gains in the percent of Proficient or Distinguished students in both RTA and non-RTA schools from 2008 – 2010, an increase of nearly 3 percent over the time period and a close match to the state-wide data. It is important to note that there has been a corresponding reduction in the average percent of students scoring in the Novice and Apprentice tiers during that same period, confirming that more students are becoming Proficient or Distinguished.

**EXHIBIT 3-9
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 2008-2010 - KCCT**

RTA Status	2008			2009			2010		
	N	A	P/D	N	A	P/D	N	A	P/D
RTA	5.2%	20.8%	74.0%	5.4%	20.0%	74.6%	4.6%	18.7%	76.8%
Non-RTA	5.0%	20.8%	74.1%	5.0%	19.7%	75.3%	4.6%	18.9%	76.6%
KY State	5.9%	21.4%	72.7%	6.0%	20.4%	73.6%	4.7%	18.4%	76.8%

Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2008-10 data.

The MGT data collection included information about the number of years a school had been participating in the RTA program. The analysis of number of years in RTA did not reveal any differences in any of the other characteristics (ethnicity, gender, F/R, EL, etc.). However, there was a slight difference identified in student achievement.

Exhibit 3-10 shows the 768 schools that have any of the RTA grades, kindergarten to third grade. The RTA schools are categorized by number of years of participation, because, as described in **Exhibit 3-1**, some schools have participated in RTA longer than others. This exhibit displays the 2010 KCCT student achievement data by length of RTA grant. The first column shows the RTA Status:

- **Y-3+** schools had an RTA grant for three or more years
- **N** schools did not have an RTA grant in 2010-11.

The data show the percent of students in each of the tiers Novice, Apprentice, and Proficient or Distinguished, as measured by the KCCT in 2010, the last year for which data are available. As described in **Exhibit 3-9**, RTA schools have only a slightly higher percentage of students in the Proficient or Distinguished tier than the non-RTA schools: 76.8 percent compared to 76.6 percent. The analysis by number of years in RTA suggests that having RTA longer has benefitted students more.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-10**, the schools that have an RTA grant and those that do not have an RTA grant show similar levels of student success. The schools with the highest

percent of students in the Proficient or Distinguished level have had the RTA grant for three or more years.

**EXHIBIT 3-10
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
KCCT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY YEARS OF RTA PARTICIPATION**

		2010		
RTA Status	n	Novice	Apprentice	Prof./Dist.
Y-3+	312	4.35%	18.4%	77.3%
N	454	4.60%	18.9%	76.6%

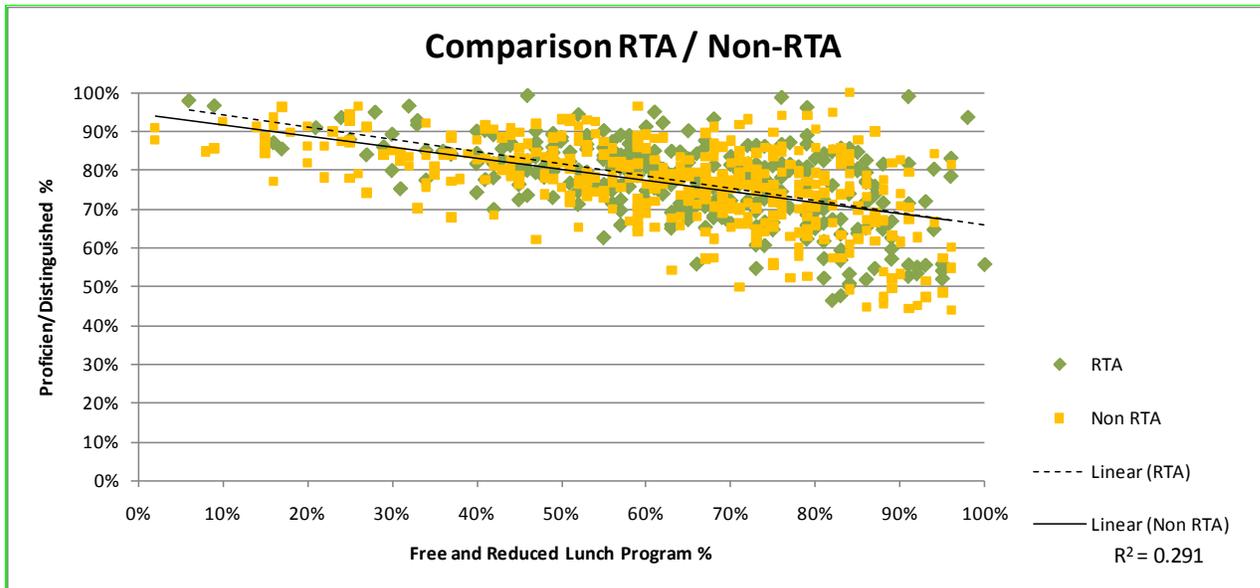
Source: Compiled by MGT from KDE 2009-10 data

The student achievement data show a positive impact on student learning in schools that have participated in RTA, and especially for schools that have participated for three years or more. The possible explanations for this improved performance are many, including the availability of additional resources (both staff and materials), training, and focused instruction. This determination is beyond the scope of this investigation. However, the possible impact and benefit of RTA being part of a system of support for struggling readers will be explored in **Section 3.4**.

In an effort to determine if any relationships existed between the only demographic factor that was different between RTA and non-RTA students and the achievement of students, MGT compared the percent of students who qualified for Free/Reduced lunch (F/R) to the percent of students at the highest achievement levels (P/D).

Exhibit 3-11 shows the comparison of RTA and non-RTA schools based on percents of poverty (F/R) and high academic performance (P/D). As shown, neither correlation is strong ($R^2 = 0.283$ for RTA Schools and $R^2 = 0.291$ for non-RTA schools). There is little difference between the two groups and there are both RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively low F/R populations and correspondingly low KCCT scores as well as RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively high F/R populations and high KCCT scores. Future RTA evaluations may benefit from further exploration of the RTA schools that appear to be exceeding expected performance compared to other schools. The schools whose data point is above the line of regression are beating the odds: they have high levels of student poverty and are still able to produce high levels of student achievement.

**EXHIBIT 3-11
RTA AND NON-RTA SCHOOLS
COMPARISON OF FREE/REDUCED (F/R) AND HIGH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
(P/D)**



Source: 2009-10 KDE data, compiled by MGT.

3.1.5 Summary

The data reviewed to determine any differences between RTA and non-RTA schools show only minor differences in the student populations. RTA schools have:

- Higher percentages of White students and lower percentages of African American students,
- Slightly higher Free/Reduced lunch status populations.

The largest area of difference is in the student achievement in RTA schools who had received the grant for more than 3 years. Students in those schools scored higher on the KCCT than their non-RTA peers and more of the students in the RTA schools scored in the Proficient/Distinguished tier than in the non-RTA schools. Given that the RTA schools have more students who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch, this achievement is impressive.

3.2 Commitment to the Chosen Intervention(s)

To determine the chosen intervention(s) at each school and the commitment level of staff to maintaining the intervention(s), MGT gathered information from several sources.

- **Electronic Survey:** RTA staff at all 324 RTA schools completed an online electronic survey in May 2011 that described the intervention(s) chosen at their site, whether it meets student needs, and whether staff would like to explore other intervention(s). The survey was developed as described in **Section 2.2.2.1**.
- **Telephone Interviews:** MGT conducted telephone interviews of the principal and RTA teacher(s) at 30 sites chosen using the process described in **Section 2.2.2.2**. These interviews allowed us to understand the choice of intervention in greater detail.
- **Site Visits:** MGT conducted site visits at six schools chosen using the process described in **Section 2.2.2.3**. The site visits provided information about the implementation of the intervention and an opportunity to ask more questions about choosing another intervention.

Section 3.2.1 provides information about the variety of intervention(s) chosen. **Section 3.2.2** provides information about the commitment of the staff to maintaining the intervention(s).

3.2.1 Chosen Intervention(s)

The electronic survey was completed by RTA staff at each of the 324 schools in May 2011. It provides information useful in understanding the RTA program interventions being used at the schools. As indicated earlier in this chapter, not all RTA schools have an RTA program in all RTA-eligible grades. Some schools only operated a Reading Recovery program in first grade; others served all grades, kindergarten through third.

Exhibit 3-12 provides information about the number of schools that reported RTA-funded programs at each grade level. As shown, more schools offered RTA programs in first grade and the fewest schools offered programs in kindergarten. However, there were more kindergarten students receiving services than third grade students.

**EXHIBIT 3-12
RTA-FUNDED PROGRAMS BY GRADE
MAY 2011**

Grade Level	Number of Schools	Number of Students
K	244	2,318
1	316	3,618
2	290	2,634
3	268	1,967
TOTAL	324 Schools	10,537

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

The survey asked about the intervention used at each grade level and provided opportunity for schools to enter information about up to four different interventions for each grade. **Exhibit 3-13** shows the number of schools by grade level and the number of reported intervention programs. Of those schools implementing more than one intervention, the largest number of programs was in first grade (84 schools reported implementing a second intervention and 12 reported a third intervention). Few schools reported implementing four different programs at any one grade level.

EXHIBIT 3-13
RTA NUMBER OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMS BY GRADE
2010-11

Grade	Intervention 1	Intervention 2	Intervention 3	Intervention 4
Kindergarten	244	12	3	0
1 st	316	84	12	3
2 nd	290	22	5	2
3 rd	268	13	5	1

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

For each intervention identified, the school was asked to indicate the number of students served by that intervention and assess its effectiveness – Highly Effective (HE), Effective (E), or Not Effective (NE). Given the relatively few schools implementing more than one intervention at a grade level, this report does not include the effectiveness data for Interventions 2 – 4 described above.

Exhibits 3-14 to 3-17 provide information regarding the interventions used at each of the RTA grade levels of kindergarten to third grade. For each table, the data include the intervention, the number of schools using the intervention, the total number of students served by that intervention, the percent of students served by RTA at that grade level and the perceived effectiveness rating, as described above. The five most-reported intervention programs at each grade level are highlighted in blue in the tables.

The kindergarten data are shown in **Exhibit 3-14**. The schools identified 27 different programs and there were 23 schools that identified “Other” as their intervention. The Other interventions are listed below the table.

The data show that schools have chosen a variety of interventions for kindergarten programs and that most believe that their chosen intervention is either highly effective (65%) or effective (33%). Seven schools (3%) reported that their chosen program was ineffective.

**EXHIBIT 3-14
KINDERGARTEN INTERVENTION PROGRAMS 2010-11**

Intervention	No. of Schools	Students		Effectiveness ¹		
		Number	%	HE	E	NE
Benchmark Phonetic Conn.	1	5	0.2		1	
Breakthrough to Literacy	1	16	0.7		1	
Compass Learning	1	15	0.6		1	
Comprehensive Interv. Model (CIM)	26	202	8.7	23	3	
Early Intervention in Reading (EIR)	6	116	4.1	3	2	1
Early Steps	1	14	0.6	1		
Earobics	3	20	0.8	1	2	
Fast ForWord	3	24	1		3	
Guided Reading Groups	5	20	0.8	5		
Harcourt Achieve	2	25	1	1		
Headsprout Early Reading	2	26	1.1	1	1	
Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)	12	152	6.5	10	2	
Lindamood Bell	5	55	2.5	4	1	
MacMillan Treasure	1	0	0	1		
Other ²	23	222	9.5	14	6	3
Pearson's Ready Readers	3	35	1.5	1	2	
Project READ	2	40	1.7		2	
Read Well	2	60	2.5	1	1	
Reading Mastery	21	316	13.6	16	5	
Reading Recovery	1	15	0.6	1		
Scott Foresman Early Reading	16	140	8.1	7	7	2
Sing, Spell, Read and Write	5	66	2.8	3	2	
Small Group Intervention	32	394	17.0	19	13	
Early/Soar to Success	11	121	5.2	5	5	1
SRA	1	7	0.3		1	
Voyager Passport	6	100	4.3	6		
Waterford Early Reading	1	24	1.0		1	
Wilson Language	1	8	0.3	1		
No program	136	94	3.4			
Totals	324	2,318	100	123	62	7
Percent				65%	33%	3%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

¹ Effectiveness scale shows the number of schools that rated that level of effectiveness.

² "Other" included the following interventions: Comprehensive Intervention Model implemented by highly qualified teacher, Classified employee provided this intervention, Due to cuts in funding, teacher was only at the school ½ day, Early Literacy, Earobics, Harcourt Trophies, Hooked on Phonics, Imagine It, Intervention Strategies, Lindamood Bell, Literacy Group, Read Naturally, Reading Mastery taught by others, Ready Readers, Serviced in ESS during student day, but after teacher's part time schedule, Sing Spell, Sounds Sensible, Wright Group Early Reading Intervention.

In first grade, as shown in **Exhibit 3-15**, none of the schools reported that their chosen intervention was not effective. There were 25 identified intervention programs in use and 13 schools that identified “Other” as their intervention. The Other interventions are listed below the table. The five most frequently used interventions are shown in blue.

**EXHIBIT 3-15
GRADE 1 INTERVENTION PROGRAMS 2010-11**

Intervention	No. of Schools	Students		Effectiveness ¹		
		Number	%	HE	E	NE
Breakthrough to Literacy	1	15	0.4		1	
Comprehensive Interv. Model (CIM)	5	55	1.5	5		
Early Intervention in Reading (EIR)	4	70	1.9	4		
Early Steps	1	15	0.4	1		
Earobics	1	10	0.2	1		
Fast ForWord	2	26	0.7	1	1	
Great Leaps	1	13	0.3		1	
Guided Reading Groups	5	56	1.5	2	3	
Harcourt Achieve	3	54	1.4	3		
Headsprout Early Reading	2	34	0.9	1	1	
Horizons	1	20	0.5	1		
Jumpstart	1	21	.5	1		
Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)	10	96	2.6	10		
Lindamood Bell	5	75	2	4	1	
MacMillan Triumphs/Treasure	2	25	0.6	1	1	
Other	13	127	3.4	10	3	
Pearson’s Ready Readers	2	17	0.4		2	
Read Well	1	10	0.2	1		
Reading Mastery	18	249	6.8	15	3	
Reading Recovery	167	1626	44	161	6	
Scott Foresman Early Reading	3	21	0.3	1	2	
Sing, Spell, Read and Write	4	67	1.8	2	2	
Small Group Intervention	15	289	8	13	2	
Early/Soar to Success	26	418	11.5	12	14	
SRA	3	37	1	3		
Voyager Passport	6	90	2.4	6		
No program	27	82				
Total	324	3618	100	259	43	0
Percent				87%	13%	0%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

¹ Effectiveness scale shows the number of schools that rated that level of effectiveness.

² “Other” included the following interventions: Earobics & Lindamood Bell, Harcourt Trophies, Imagine It & Literacy First, Leveled Readers, Literacy Support groups, Read Naturally, Ready Readers, Scott Foresman’s My Sidewalks, Wright Group Early Reading Intervention.

The data show that schools have chosen a variety of interventions for their first grade programs and that all the schools reported that their chosen intervention was either Highly Effective (87%) or Effective (14%).

As shown in **Exhibit 3-16**, there were 28 different programs identified in second grade and there were 25 schools that identified “Other” as their intervention. The Other interventions are listed below the table. The five most frequently used interventions are shown in blue.

**EXHIBIT 3-16
GRADE 2 INTERVENTION PROGRAMS 2010-11**

Intervention	No. of Schools	Students		Effectiveness ¹		
		Number	%	HE	E	NE
Breakthrough to Literacy	1	15	0.5		1	
Carbo Reading	1	7	0.2		1	
Compass Learning	1	15	0.5		1	
Comprehensive Interv. Model (CIM)	50	351	13.2	38	11	1
Early Intervention in Reading (EIR)	3	37	1.4	3		
Early Steps	1	15	0.5	1		
Earobics	1	8	0.3	1		
Fast ForWord	3	27	1	1	2	
Great Leaps	1	9	0.3		1	
Guided Reading Groups	20	196	7.4	12	8	
Harcourt Achieve	3	52	1.9	3		
Headsprout Early Reading	1	11	0.4		1	
Horizons	1	23	0.8	1		
Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)	17	183	6.9	13	4	
Lindamood Bell	6	91	3.4	5	1	
MacMillan Triumphs/Treasure	3	38	1.4	2	1	
Other ²	25	243	9.2	12	12	1
Pearson’s Ready Readers	2	16	0.6		2	
Project READ	1	17	0.6		1	
Quick Reads	1	4	0.1		1	
Read Well	1	10	0.4		1	

**EXHIBIT 3-16 (Continued)
GRADE 2 INTERVENTION PROGRAMS 2010-11**

Intervention	No. of Schools	Students		Effectiveness ¹		
		Number	%	HE	E	NE
Reading Mastery	24	288	11	19	5	
Reading Recovery	1	10	0.3	1		
Scott Foresman Early Reading	4	77	2.9		3	1
Sing, Spell, Read and Write	1	10	0.4	1		
Small Group Intervention	38	352	13.3	27	11	
Early/Soar to Success	44	441	16.7	15	22	7
SRA	4	36	1.3	3		
Voyager Passport	6	75	2.8	4	2	
No program ³	64	56				
Total	324	2634³	99.7	162	92	10
Percent				62%	35%	3%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

¹ Effectiveness scale shows the number of schools that rated that level of effectiveness.

² "Other" included the following interventions: Comprehensive Intervention Model & Small Group, Earobics & Lindamood Bell, Harcourt Trophies, Imagine It & Literacy First, Literacy Support groups, My Reading Coach, Read Naturally, Ready Readers, Scott Foresman's "My Sidewalks", System 44, Unique Reader, and Wright Group Early Reading Intervention.

³ Total does not include the students listed under "No Program."

The data shows that schools have chosen a variety of interventions for their second grade programs and that nearly all believe that their chosen intervention is either highly effective (62%) or effective (35%). Unlike first grade, where Reading Recovery was the dominant program choice, several programs had large numbers of participants in second grade and a wider range of perceived effectiveness.

Exhibit 3-17, shows the data for third grade interventions. There were 26 programs identified and 24 schools that identified "Other" as their intervention. The Other interventions are listed below the table. The five most frequently used interventions are shown in blue.

**Exhibit 3-17
GRADE 3 INTERVENTION PROGRAMS 2010-11**

Intervention	No. of Schools	Students		Effectiveness ¹		
		Number	%	HE	E	NE
Breakthrough to Literacy	1	6	0.3		1	
Carbo Reading	3	21	1	1	2	
Compass Learning	2	61	3	1	1	
Comprehensive Interv. Model (CIM)	31	189	9.4	23	8	1
Early Intervention in Reading (EIR)	2	9	0.4	2		
Fast ForWord	4	34	1.7		4	
Great Leaps	2	9	0.4	1	1	
Guided Reading Groups	15	124	6.2	8	7	
Harcourt Achieve	2	18	0.9	2		
Headsprout Early Reading	1	8	0.4		1	
Horizons	1	16	0.8	1		
Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)	12	57	2.8	7	5	
Lindamood Bell	4	67	3.3	3	1	
MacMillan Triumphs/Treasure	3	23	1.1	2	1	
Other ²	24	201	9.2	12	10	2
Pearson's Ready Readers	2	17	0.8		2	
Quick Reads	1	7	0.35	1		
Read Well	1	10	0.4		1	
Reading Mastery	23	231	11.5	16	7	
Reading Recovery	2	18	0.9	1	1	
Scott Foresman Early Reading	4	56	2.8		2	2
Sing, Spell, Read and Write	1	14	0.7		1	
Small Group Intervention	29	244	12.2	21	8	
Early/Soar to Success	37	360	18	17	17	3
SRA	7	54	2.7	4	3	
Voyager Passport	6	60	3	4	2	
Wilson Language	1	11	0.5	1		
No program	102	42				
Total	324	1925	99.7	128	86	8
Percent				58%	39%	4%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

¹ Effectiveness scale shows the number of schools that rated that level of effectiveness.

² "Other" included the following interventions: Coach, Does not serve this grade level. Due to large enrollment of our school, another intervention teacher (not RTA) served the students, Earobics & Lindamood Bell, Harcourt Trophies, Imagine It & Literacy First, Literacy Support groups, Read Naturally and Read Naturally & CIM, Ready Readers, Scott Foresman's My Sidewalks, Wright Group Early Reading Intervention.

In third grade, like all other grades, the data show that schools have chosen a variety of interventions for their RTA program and that most believe that their chosen intervention is either highly effective (58%) or effective (39%). Eight of the schools reported that their chosen intervention was not effective, compared to 10 in second grade, but this represented a slightly higher percentage of the total number of schools in third grade.

The percent of schools reporting that their chosen intervention was highly effective (58%) dropped compared to second grade. However, these levels of perceived effectiveness are most different when compared across all the RTA grade levels.

To compare the differences in reported effectiveness, **Exhibit 3-18** shows the percent of schools reporting each level of effectiveness for each RTA grade. It is important to remember that these data represent self-perceptions. Each RTA school reported whether they believed that their programs were/were not effective at each grade level.

**EXHIBIT 3-18
SUMMARY PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS
GRADES K - 3**

Grade	Effectiveness		
	Highly Effective	Effective	Not Effective
Kindergarten	65%	33%	3%
1 st	87%	14%	0%
2 nd	62%	35%	3%
3 rd	58%	39%	4%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

The highest level of perceived effectiveness for the chosen program was at the first grade level, where no schools reported that their program was ineffective, and the lowest level of perceived effectiveness for the chosen program was at third grade, where less than 60 percent perceived the program to be highly effective and 4% identified their program as not effective. Clearly, there are schools that are currently operating programs that they perceive to be only effective and some that are not effective.

MGT asked the RTA teachers to quantify the amount of training they had received, both initially and during the 2010-11 school year. The training was intended to support the implementation of the chosen intervention program at the identified grade level. **Exhibit 3-19** shows teacher-reported initial training hours and **Exhibit 3-20** shows current year training hours along a continuum from less than 5 hours (<5) to more than 20 hours (>20) for each of the RTA grade levels. In both tables, the total shows the number of teachers who reported hours in that time span. The data show the total number of teachers who participated in that amount of training, but each school only reported once for each grade level. For example, of the 324 RTA schools reporting at the kindergarten level, 88 teachers reported no RTA program, 67 teachers reported less than five hours of training, but 90 teachers reported more than 20 hours of training.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-19**, most teachers reported participating in more than 20 hours of initial training with the largest group in first grade. However, the second largest group reported participating in less than five hours of initial training.

**EXHIBIT 3-19
RTA CHOSEN INTERVENTIONS
HOURS OF INITIAL TRAINING**

Grades	N/A	< 5 hrs	5-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	> 20 hrs	Total # Schools
Kindergarten	88	67	35	44	90	324
1st	9	34	26	32	223	324
2nd	35	62	49	58	120	324
3rd	62	59	50	52	101	324
Total Number of Teachers		222	160	186	534	

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-20**, the reported number of hours of training during 2010-11 continued to be the highest for teachers in first grade, with significantly more of those teachers reporting more than 20 hours of training. The data showing a high number of hours of 2010-11 training at grade 1 are not surprising since Reading Recovery is the most widely used first grade program and Reading Recovery requires continuing contact training each year. The number of teachers who reported participating in less than five hours of training increased compared to the number of teachers who reported fewer than five hours of initial training. Many teachers reported limited RTA training in 2010-11, however, it is important to remember that these data are self-reported and that much of the training is program-specific, rather than grade level-specific. Additionally, RTA teachers may have participated in district- or school-sponsored training that was not reported here. These data are informational and interesting, but may not be helpful in understanding the impact of training on student performance.

**EXHIBIT 3-20
RTA CHOSEN INTERVENTIONS
HOURS OF 2010-11 TRAINING**

Grades	N/A	< 5 hrs	5-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	> 20 hrs
Kindergarten	66	68	47	27	50
1st	19	53	55	45	147
2nd	39	96	56	41	62
3rd	51	83	56	35	47
Total Number of Teachers		300	214	148	306

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

MGT also asked the RTA teachers to evaluate their level of confidence working with students in the demographic groups identified through the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation: All students, minority students, Both genders, Free/Reduced Lunch Status, English Language Proficiency Status, and Disability Status.

Exhibit 3-21 shows that most of the RTA teachers report being either very confident (81%) or somewhat confident (17%) in their ability to improve student learning with

various groups of students. As shown, of the 321 RTA teachers who responded to the questions about teacher confidence, 304 teachers reported being very confident with all students, 288 teachers reported being very confident with minority students, and only 134 teachers reported being very confident working with English Language Proficiency students. Another large group reported being only somewhat confident (125 teachers) or not confident (7 teachers) working with students with disabilities.

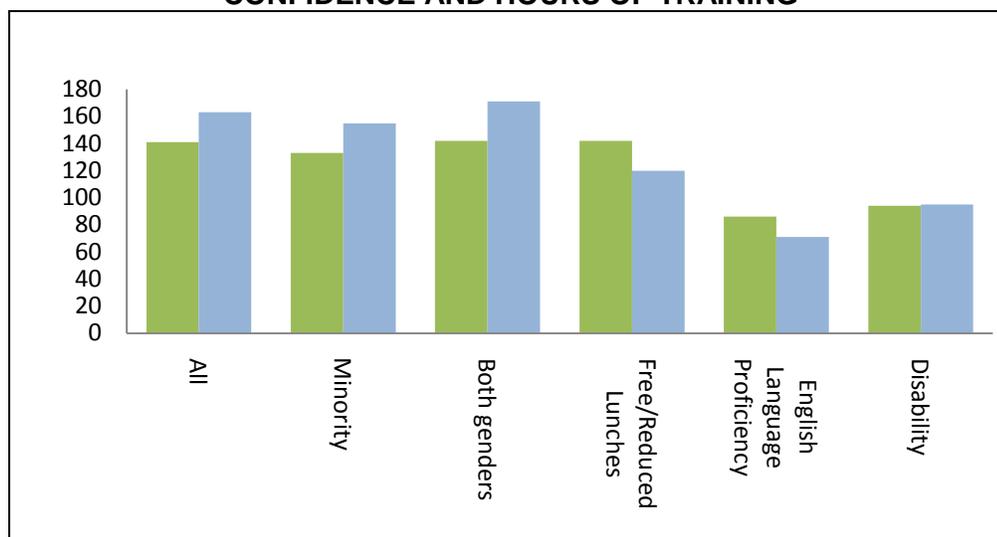
**EXHIBIT 3-21
RTA TEACHER CONFIDENCE
SPECIAL GROUPS
N=321**

Groups of students	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Confident
All	304	17	0
Minority	288	28	5
Both genders	313	8	0
Free/Reduced Lunch	311	10	0
English Language Proficiency	157	134	30
Disability	189	125	7
Average Percent	81%	17%	2%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Finally, MGT explored whether the teachers who reported being very confident to teach students were the same teachers who had reported high numbers of hours of training. **Exhibit 3-22** shows the number of RTA teachers based on reported hours of training and reported level of confidence. The green bar represents the number that reported more than 20 hours of training and reported being very confident to teach the student demographic groups. The blue bar represents the number of RTA teachers who reported fewer than five hours of training but also reported being very confident to teach each of the groups of students. As shown, for all students, 140 teachers reported having more than 20 hours of training and reported being very confident, but 160 teachers reported having less than 5 hours of training and also reported being very confident. There does not appear to be a correlation between number of hours of training and confidence, but these data further show a lack of confidence in working with both English language proficiency students and students with disabilities.

**EXHIBIT 3-22
RTA TEACHER
CONFIDENCE AND HOURS OF TRAINING**



Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Given that RTA schools have a higher percentage of students who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch status and a slightly higher percentage of students who qualify for English Language Proficiency status (see **Exhibit 3-7**), there may be a need for targeted professional development at the state level.

3.2.1 Level of Commitment to the Chosen Intervention(s)

MGT looked at several issues that might reveal the level of commitment to the chosen intervention(s). The issues included:

- Interest in alternative intervention(s).
- Concerns or issues with the current program.
- Preferred characteristics of alternative program(s).
- Desirable characteristics of the current program(s).

It is important to remember that RTA schools had to identify an intervention program for each grade level in their initial application, i.e., Fast ForWord in kindergarten, Reading Recovery in first, and Reading Mastery in second and third grades or a district that decided to focus only on one grade might have identified Reading Mastery for second grade and planned no interventions for kindergarten and first and third grades. For some of the RTA schools, those decisions were made nearly seven years ago. MGT used data from the electronic survey and the site visits to understand whether schools, given what they now understand, would choose a different intervention.

3.2.1.1 Alternative interventions

Exhibit 3-23 provides information from the survey in response to the question, “Would you choose a different intervention? If yes, for which grade level(s)?” As shown, 64 (20%) of the schools would like to choose a different intervention for at least one grade level; 257 indicated that they would not choose another intervention and three schools left the question blank. The data further reveal that the schools would most like to choose a different intervention for second and third grades. This data is in alignment with the data regarding perceived effectiveness presented earlier: more schools reported lower effectiveness levels for programs at second and third grades.

**EXHIBIT 3-23
CHOOSE A DIFFERENT INTERVENTION?**

	YES		NO	Blank
Different Intervention?	64		257	3
	Number	Percent		
Kindergarten	30	46%		
1 st	34	53%		
2 nd	53	82%		
3 rd	45	70%		

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

3.2.12 Concerns with the Current Program

To understand the interest in choosing a different intervention program(s), MGT asked schools who wanted to choose a different intervention to identify the concern(s) or issue(s) with their current intervention program. **Exhibit 3-24** shows the concerns/issues cited by the 64 schools that indicated that they would like to select and implement a different program. Schools could identify multiple concerns, so the data do not total 100 percent. As shown, the largest share of respondents indicated that lack of materials was a concern (32 respondents or 50%). Other issue(s) included that the program meets few needs (42%), difficulty monitoring progress (39%) and inadequate teacher support (25%). Teachers could also indicate “Other” and provide a description. Comments Included as “Other” can be found in **Appendix A-2**.

**EXHIBIT 3-24
CONCERN(S) OR ISSUE(S) WITH CURRENT INTERVENTION**

Concern(s) / Issue(s)	Number	Percent
Materials lacking	32	50%
Teacher support lacking	16	25%
Difficult to monitor progress	25	39%
Meets few needs	27	42%
Other	32	50%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

The needs identified included a wide range of issues, some that are program specific, some that are related to the school or staff, and some that are related to the needs of specific types of students.

MGT asked the schools to identify any issues/concerns which varied by program. The responses included some very specific concerns about individual programs and are shown below:

- "Earobics is good for the younger primary; older students lose interest. Lindamood Bell is most effective for speech problems. Not all interventions students have speech problems."
- "I have been using Soar to Success materials but at a higher level, as well as conferencing with the teacher to focus on areas and forms of genre where students are weak."
- "We have found CIM to be more effective than Scott Foresman."
- "It just needs to be updated to meet the needs of our students, as well as some better forms for documentation of progress."
- "But just using 2 programs does not always meet all students' needs."
- "The program has been working. It's a framework and from the framework I develop the intervention. There are times that I would like a program to follow that some of my fellow RTA Interventionists have in their districts."
- "Read Naturally is what I must use now but the children really need CIM more."
- "Would like a program that meets the needs of more students."
- "We need to be joining other schools in CIM."
- "The literacy support groups lack a direction and sequence."
- "For the most struggling first graders, they need a more individualized program that moves at a pace appropriate for them with more repetition."

- "Due to staffing cuts by our district, our intervention staff has been cut in half. While Reading Recovery is a very effective program, it limits the number of students our RTA teacher can serve."
- "CIM model will vary based on grade level and student needs."
- "Need more phonics support. The newer version of Soar to Success provides more phonics, but the books are not high-interest."
- "We need additional materials for 2nd. and 3rd. grade students."
- "Not high interest."
- "This program is based on the same approach as Early Success, but it is a newer program with more materials and the lessons go deeper in depth."
- "We have found the Comprehensive Intervention Model to be more effective than Scott Foresman Early Intervention."

These RTA teachers indicated a need to find more effective ways to support student learning. Some indicated that they have found another approach they believe would be better: "Read Naturally is what I must use now, but the children really need CIM more." Others may need to do more research before making a decision: "Would like a program that meets the needs of more students."

At the six site visit schools, MGT staff explored the issue of the chosen intervention and whether the school would choose a different program. Responses were mixed and varied by grade level. Three of the six schools indicated that they would not choose a different intervention; three of the schools indicated that they would like to choose a different intervention. The comments below are from the interviews conducted at the sites:

- One school was implementing Reading Mastery at kindergarten and Reading Recovery at first grade. The teacher described herself as, "Schizophrenic. Sometimes I can't remember whether I should prompt, 'Say it the fast way.' or should encourage the student to use what they know about language and print. The two programs are so different." The principal at that school indicated that they knew they wanted Reading Recovery, weren't sure about programs for the other grades, but they had heard that Reading Mastery was a good one. "We had to choose in a hurry because the grant was due and we didn't have much time." At this school, they would keep Reading Recovery, the first grade program, but look for something different for kindergarten and other grades.
- One school was implementing Early/Soar to Success, but had recently discovered Orton Gillingham and was impressed by the progress that students had made using that as a supplement to the Early/Soar to Success program. The principal indicated that they "...weren't sure if they would make a change, but would like to consider it, talk with the whole primary faculty about it." The teacher indicated an interest in "...doing whatever we can to help students succeed."

- One school was implementing Reading Recovery and Early/Soar to Success. The principal and RTA teacher indicated that they were looking at other programs, including the Arkansas model, Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM). This principal indicated that their school was, "...focused on highly skilled teachers, rather than a highly touted program. We can't go back to just using 'a program.' Working with struggling readers is hard, but we are beginning to see it work."

3.2.1.3 Preferred Characteristics of Alternative Programs

The data in **Exhibit 3-25** show the characteristics of alternative programs sought by the 64 schools which had indicated that they would like to choose a different intervention program. The data show many areas of interest, but having more effective student materials was the most commonly cited characteristic (70%). Schools could identify all that applied, so the data do not total 100 percent. Comments were gathered from the 25 schools that want a "Different Approach", as well as the schools that indicated "Other". These comments can be found in **Appendix A-2**.

**EXHIBIT 3-25
DESIRED CHARACTERISTIC(S) FOR DIFFERENT INTERVENTION PROGRAM(S)**

Characteristic(s)	Number	Percent
Different approach	25	39%
More effective student materials	45	70%
Better teacher materials	33	51%
Training or professional development available	28	44%
Progress monitoring	32	50%
Other	16	25%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

The data from the survey and the site interviews indicate significant interest in choosing different intervention programs at some schools. However, one principal cautioned that, "Choosing a new intervention should be done in a thoughtful, intentional way. Schools should have to provide evidence that shows lack of student progress and provide a rationale for the program they think would be more effective."

Although 20 percent of the schools indicated an interest in choosing other intervention program(s), 80 percent of the schools indicated that they were not interested. MGT asked those schools to identify the program characteristics that were most important in their current interventions.

3.2.1.4 Desirable Characteristics of Current Programs

Exhibit 3-26 shows the desirable characteristics of current programs among the 257 schools that indicated they were not interested in choosing other program(s). The question provided some possible reasons and offered a text box for "Other." The comments included as "Other" can be found in **Appendix A-2**. Most schools indicated that they valued the approach of their chosen program (94%), although having good student materials (80%) and progress monitoring (82%) were also highly valued. Schools could check all that applied, so the data do not total 100 percent.

**EXHIBIT 3-26
DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT PROGRAM(S)**

Characteristic of Current Program(s)	Number	Percent
Approach	243	94%
Student materials	206	80%
Teacher materials	186	72%
Training or professional development	178	70%
Progress monitoring	218	82%
Other	30	11%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

MGT also provided an opportunity for comment if important program characteristics varied by grade level. Those comments are provided below:

- “Teacher training is the most important!”
- “The one on one individualized instruction that Reading Recovery provides to first grade students.”
- “Guided Reading can easily adapt to meet individual and grade level needs.”
- “Reading Recovery is extremely effective.”
- “Need for additional funding for RTA teacher to service more students.”
- “The Reading Recovery is a most complete program and addresses student needs well. Teachers can see huge gains with this program. The literacy groups are effective too, but due to not being one on one, they are not as effective as individualized.”
- “Reading Recovery is an excellent model to implement for struggling readers. As evidenced by the data, students really benefit from the intervention. It provides us with monthly professional development and daily progress monitoring.”
- “Leveled Literacy is used in the classroom by classroom teachers.”
- “Again, we want programs that foster acceleration, not remediation.”
- “Using CIM and the Reading Recovery training approach provide intensive intervention and we are thrilled with the results.”
- “More effective materials for EL students would be something of interest.”
- “Both programs are very effective due to the quality of the materials and the simplicity of the approach.”
- “1st grade – Reading Recovery more effective.”

- “Reading Recovery is only for first grade; other grade levels receive guided reading instruction.”
- “Ability to tailor interventions strategy to individual student needs.”
- “Research-based.”
- “There is a newer copyright version of Early Success available which includes more materials geared toward comprehension and is more effective overall, but we cannot afford to purchase it since grant funding has been cut.”
- “Excellent Intense Training. Outstanding and informative Professional Development!”

The data indicate that 20 percent of the RTA schools would like the opportunity to choose other intervention program(s) for a variety of reasons, including lack of student progress, lack of appropriate materials, and lack of teacher support. The RTA Steering Committee may want to consider allowing schools to present a rationale for choosing other intervention program(s) in future grant renewal applications.

3.3 System of Support

This section of the report will answer the following research question:

Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

In order to determine if an overall system of support for struggling readers exists and how RTA fits into that system at each school, MGT gathered information from several sources. All 324 RTA schools completed an online electronic survey in May 2011. As described earlier in **Section 2.2.2.2**, the electronic survey included nine sections. Survey **Sections 1, 3, and 7** were used to answer this question. MGT also gathered information from the telephone and site visit interviews.

For this evaluation, “an overall system of support for struggling readers” was defined as having the following components:

- an RTA team that consisted of more than one person beyond the RTA teacher;
- an identified set of activities; and
- at least one annual RTA team meeting.

Of the 324 RTA schools, 318 have a system of support for struggling readers that meet these criteria. Three schools have teams, which do not include the RTA teacher, and three schools have teams that do not have meetings.

The data in **Exhibits 3-27** through **3-28** provide information from the 324 RTA schools regarding the previously described components of a system of support for struggling readers. For each table, the data show the number and percent of schools reporting.

3.3.1 RTA Team Membership

To meet the definition of having an RTA team, schools needed to have at least one more person besides the RTA teacher identified as a member.

Exhibit 3-26 provides information on the membership of the RTA Teams at the schools. As shown, all but three schools indicated that the RTA teacher was involved. Most schools also indicated that the principal or other administrator was involved. Nearly one-third of the schools reported that a parent was a member of the team and 31 percent reported that there were other people involved with the team. Comments from schools indicating “Other” can be found in **Appendix A-2**.

**EXHIBIT 3-27
SYSTEM OF SUPPORT
RTA TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

Role / Position	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
RTA-funded teacher(s)	321	99%
Principal or other administrator	314	97%
Data Coordinator	306	94%
Primary Classroom Teacher(s)	277	85%
Counselor	121	37%
Special Education Teacher(s)	154	47%
Parent	101	31%
Other	55	31%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

The data clearly show that people in many different roles are part of the system of support for struggling readers at individual schools. It is important to note that several schools identified Response to Intervention (RTI) positions. RTI Teams were described by many of the schools during the telephone interviews and site visits.

Comments gathered during telephone interviews and site visits included:

- Principal: “My RTA Team is not separate. It’s really my RTI Team. RTA is part of the bigger system that looks at all students in the schools and makes decisions about student progress and allocating resources.”
- Teacher: “We cover every student through either RTA or RTI. We have to track them all.”
- Teacher: “RTI has changed classrooms and the RTA program. I (the RTA teacher) am feeling overwhelmed; the special education teacher is underwhelmed. Fewer kids are qualifying for special education.”

3.3.2 RTA Team Activities

To meet the definition of a team, there should be a clear set of activities that are connected to the RTA Team.

Exhibit 3-28 provides information about the RTA Team activities, showing the number and percent of the 324 RTA schools reporting each activity. The schools were asked to identify any of the listed activities and could define “Other” activities. School activities indicated as “Other” can be found in **Appendix A-2**. As shown, nearly all of the 324 RTA schools *review individual student progress* and *analyze student data* as an RTA team. Eighteen schools identified “Other” activities.

EXHIBIT 3-28 RTA TEAM ACTIVITIES

Activity	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Develop and review student selection and exit criteria	293	90%
Review individual student progress	316	97%
Analyze student data	315	96%
Plan professional development	136	42%
Support parent involvement	197	60%
Other	18	5%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Data gathered from the telephone interviews and the six RTA site visit schools included more specific information regarding student progress.

The MGT telephone protocol (See **Appendix B**) included a question about how data were collected and organized. Many sites reported the use of a data wall or data notebook. During the six site visits, MGT staff had opportunities to see data walls in schools and talk with staff about their use of data. The following comments were gathered from schools:

- RTA Teacher: “The SST meetings are an opportunity to get feedback from the teachers about who is improving and who needs more help.”
- RTA Teacher: “It’s pretty much me. I have the data information in my room, but no one asks about it.”
- Principal: “We have an assessment wall. It used to belong to the RTA teacher. Now, only classroom teachers add data because these are their students and each of them is responsible for the progress.”

Many of the site visit schools described data collection tools that were used to monitor and assess progress. The tools included monitoring notebooks and “data walls.”



The data wall pictured to the left was at one of the site visit schools. The school had a sophisticated system of gathering and reporting student progress based on a variety of student achievement data. The school used data from multiple sources, including the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, and posted data for fall, winter, and spring after each of the testing windows for each of the students, not just the RTA students. Students were identified from the lowest level (red), (defined in Kentucky as Novice) through the highest level (blue) (identified in Kentucky as Distinguished). The principal and teachers monitored student performance over the year, discussing individual students, and celebrating as students improved and moved to higher levels. At this school, the classroom teachers were responsible for putting the data on the wall.

The picture below shows the data wall in another site visit school. This school chose to define students based on the RTI tier status. In this photo, most students are in Tier 1. This is typically the highest level and includes students needing only general classroom instruction to be successful. In this example, there are a few students in Tier 2. These are typically students needing some assistance, and more students in Tier 3, typically those students needing the most assistance. Some of these students may qualify for support from special education.



Both examples show a commitment to all the children in the school and a commitment to knowing all children well enough to truly “leave no child behind.” In many of the schools, the RTA program is but one of the possible interventions. In other schools, it is the only intervention program available. In these schools, principals, RTA teachers, general classroom teachers, and support staff are very worried about losing the RTA grant (and its staffing).

Many of the principals and teachers cited a lack of funding or uncertainty about funding during the telephone or site interviews in response to how the RTA team could be more effective.

Comments included:

- “If RTA was fully funded, I could implement this program.”
- “We need to add another teacher. We need more time in schools to improve instruction.”
- “This school is focused on every child every day and no one slips through the cracks, but we could use more funding and more time. We currently only have support two times per week.”
- “Inconsistent and declining funding has been a problem. How do I support students when I don’t know how much time or money I will have from one year to the next?”
- “Our Reading Recovery program is funding-dependent. If the district had to fund it, we would likely move to small group instruction.”
- “We need more time and more people so we can have smaller groups. I don’t know what we would do without the grant.”

3.3.3 Frequency of Meetings

In order to be defined as having a functioning RTA team, the team needed to meet at least once annually. To be effective, teams do not have to meet daily or weekly, but if the school indicated that the team never meets, MGT assumed that the team was not effective or viable.

Exhibit 3-29 provides information from the RTA teachers regarding the meeting schedule for the RTA Team based on the number and percent of the 324 RTA schools reporting meetings. As shown, most of the RTA Teams meet monthly. It should be noted that these monthly RTA meetings may in fact be RTI discussions, as described earlier, rather than only focused on RTA. Comments included as “Other” can be found in **Appendix A-2**.

EXHIBIT 3-29 RTA TEAM MEETINGS

Meetings	Number	Percent
Weekly	47	14%
Monthly	133	41%
1-2 times per year	47	14%
Never	3	0.9%
Other	91	28%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Nearly all of the RTA schools have identified a team that is supporting struggling readers. Only 1 percent of the RTA schools did not report having such a team. Nearly all of the schools reported gathering and reporting student achievement data. Only 3 percent of the RTA schools indicated that they were not collecting and analyzing student progress information. Nearly all of the RTA schools reported that they had teams meeting at least annually. It appears that many schools have incorporated RTA as part of their RTI program. Nearly all RTA schools appear to have a system that enables them to monitor student performance and allocate resources to the students in the greatest need. One RTA school commented,

“Prior to RTA, we were throwing darts to solve problems. We used DRA, Reading Recovery, and Saxon Phonics. There was no consistency or coherency. With RTA, there is a focus on highly skilled teachers, rather than on a highly touted program.”

3.4 Program Study Findings

The **Program Study** looked at the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
2. What are the chosen intervention(s) and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?
3. Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

The findings for this study include the following:

- RTA schools have higher percentages of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (F/R) and slightly higher percentages of students who qualify for the English Language Proficiency (EL) program. Staff reported confidence working with students who qualify for Free or Reduced lunch (F/R) , but a large percentage of RTA staff indicated less confidence in meeting the needs of EL students.
- Student achievement is highest in schools that have been part of the RTA program for at least three years. This finding suggests that the RTA requirements—having highly trained intervention staff, using early reading intervention programs which offer short-term, intensive instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency, and participating in a variety of required professional development activities—have school-wide benefits, not just benefits for the students involved in the RTA program.
- The relationship between student achievement and poverty is not significantly different in RTA and non-RTA schools. MGT plotted the data sets for RTA and non-RTA schools, comparing the percent of students who qualify for F/R lunch to the percent of students at the highest achievement levels. Neither correlation is strong. There is little difference between the two groups and

there are both RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively low F/R populations and correspondingly low KCCT scores as well as RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively high F/R populations and high KCCT scores. Future RTA evaluations may benefit from further exploration of the RTA schools that appear to be exceeding expected performance compared to other schools. The schools with data points above the line of regression are beating the odds: they have high levels of student poverty and are still able to produce high levels of student achievement.

- Twenty percent of the RTA schools report that they would like to consider a different intervention at one or more grade levels. Some schools chose the intervention program or materials seven years ago, and they are more informed consumers now. Other schools may have only recently selected a program, but are not seeing the improvement they had expected.
- Some of the intervention programs used at the schools do not use materials that are aligned to state performance levels. Teachers and principals reported having no information whether what students were reading was at an appropriate level of difficulty.
- Most schools reported having a system of support for struggling readers, but the most successful schools did not identify an RTA Team. In those schools, RTA is only one of several programs of support and they are more likely to talk about a literacy team or a data team. Student performance and improvement are responsibilities shared by everyone in the school, not just the RTA teacher.
- It was reported that funding for the RTA program changes late in each budget year. It is hard to create a stable system of support when funding for important intervention programs – like RTA – is unpredictable from year to year.

3.5 Strengths and Limitations of the Program Study

The Program Study was conducted using data from a variety of sources, including the Evaluation III Report gathered electronically from all RTA schools, the telephone interview data from 30 sites, and the site visit data from six sites. Having data from all RTA sites was critical to understanding all sites and exploring the differences.

MGT also gathered data from the KDE website. Some of the schools that had RTA grants have now closed or been combined with other schools. MGT had incomplete data from some schools, reducing the data set for all schools from 785 to 768 and for RTA schools from 324 to 314.

The data for the telephone interviews and six site visits were gathered from a stratified, random sample and provided important qualitative information to understand individual differences or issues within the electronic data. Having this variety of data from both comprehensive and random data sources significantly strengthened the validity of the data collected and reduced the data limitations.

4.0 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY

4.0 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY

The goal of the **Achievement Study** was to understand 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 in spring of 2010 and the district-selected Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) administered in the six schools selected for a site visit. **Appendix C** has a review of the use of the MAP assessment in the 30 schools that participated in the telephone interviews and the 6 schools that had site visits.

The research questions for the **Achievement Study** were identified in **Section 2.3.1**, as follows:

1. To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?
2. For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

The methodologies and the data gathered to answer the achievement study questions were described in detail in **Chapter 2**. This chapter has four sections.

Section 4.1 reviews the data from the ITBS regarding the number and percent of students who have received RTA intervention and who have maintained or improved their reading performance over time.

Section 4.2 explores the reading performance of RTA students in the six schools selected for a site visit based on their fall (or winter for Kindergarten students) to spring performance on the MAP assessment.

Section 4.3 describes the findings relative to student achievement and the recommendations or implications for the RTA program.

Section 4.4 outlines the strengths and limitations for the RTA Achievement Study.

4.1 Student Achievement Data - ITBS

The ITBS study included an analysis of the performance of all Kentucky students in third and fourth grades in spring 2010 compared to the performance of students who participated in the RTA program.

4.1.1 Student Reading Performance Maintenance/Improvement

The goal of this area of study was to determine if students who had received RTA intervention services had become proficient readers, as measured by the ITBS, administered in the spring of 2010. MGT used the RTA student database to identify those students who met specific categories of RTA intervention. The categories were defined as RTA-funded, Other, and RTA + Other. RTA teachers identified the

intervention(s) for each student as part of the online KY RTA student identification process in spring 2010.

■ **GRADE 4 – ITBS Spring 2010**

- Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2008-09. Group is identified as **G-4**.
- Received an RTA intervention + Other intervention in third grade. Group is identified as **G-4 + Other**.
- Received an Other intervention in third grade. Group is identified as **G-4 Other**.

■ **GRADE 3 – ITBS Spring 2010**

- Intervention - Third grade only
 - * Received an RTA intervention in third grade in 2009-10. This group is identified as **G-3**.
 - * Received an RTA intervention + Other intervention in third grade. Group is identified as **G-3 + Other**.
 - * Received an Other intervention in third grade. Group is identified as **G-3 Other**.
- Intervention - Second and third grades
 - * Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2008-09 and an RTA intervention in third grade in 2009-10. This group is identified as **G-2 +3**.
 - * Received an RTA intervention + Other intervention in both second and third grades. This group is identified as **G-2 + 3 + Other**.
 - * Received an Other intervention in both second and third grades. This group is identified as **G-2 + 3 Other**.
- Intervention - Second grade only
 - * Received an RTA intervention in second grade in 2008-09 (ITBS in third grade, spring 2010). This group is identified as **G-2**.
 - * Received an RTA intervention + Other intervention in second grade. Group is identified as **G-2 + Other**.
 - * Received an Other intervention in second grade. Group is defined as **G-2 Other**.

MGT created a data chart that identifies each of these groups. **Exhibits 4-1** through **4-3** show the number and percent of students in each of the study groups. As shown in **Exhibit 4-1**, more than 50,000 students in each grade took the ITBS test in 2010. Forty-five percent of the third grade students in the state attended an RTA school; 42 percent of the fourth grade students attended an RTA school.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
2010-11 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY
STUDENT GROUPS**

Grade Level	All Schools		RTA Schools		Non-RTA Schools	
	n Students	n Schools	n Students	% Students	n Students	% Students
Grade 3	50,509	704	22,749	45%	27,760	55%
Grade 4	50,052	736	21,253	42%	28,799	58%

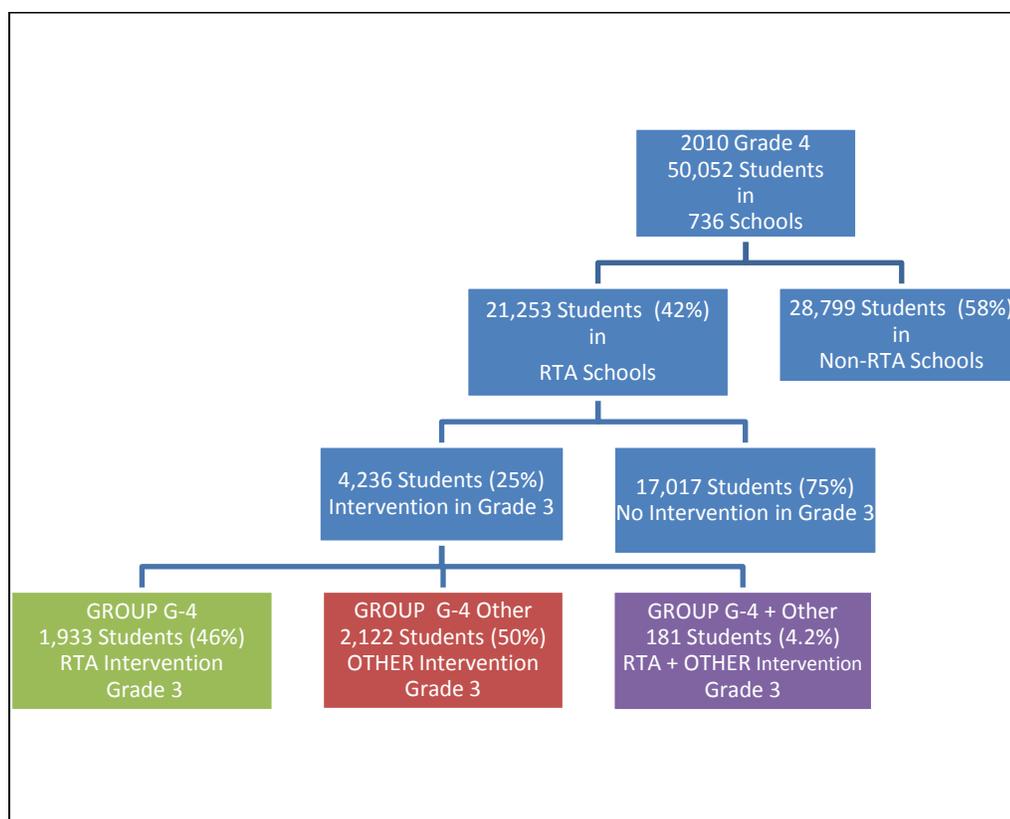
Source: KDE data 2010, compiled by MGT.

Exhibit 4-2 shows the structure of the data gathered and identifies the groups of students who took the ITBS test in fourth grade in 2009-10 and participated in at least one intervention in third grade in 2008-09. It is important to remember that students may have participated in interventions in earlier grades, but that the Kentucky Student Information System (KSIS) was not completed with individual student identification numbers before 2008-09. This exhibit includes the number and percent of students described in **Exhibit 4-1** and also shows the number and percent of students in each of the study groups defined earlier.

There are three groups of students who participated in third grade reading intervention(s) defined in this exhibit. As shown, there were 4,236 students (25%) in the RTA schools that had an intervention – either RTA, Other, or RTA + Other. The RTA intervention group was slightly smaller, 1,933 (46%) of the students, than the Other intervention group, 2,122 (50%), and the smallest group, 181 (4.2%), had both an RTA and Other intervention.

For each type of intervention, the exhibit shows the number and percent of students who took the ITBS test in fourth grade, but participated in each type of intervention in third grade. The student group shown in the green box participated in an RTA intervention. The student group shown in the red box participated in an Other intervention. The student group shown in the purple box participated in both an RTA + Other intervention.

EXHIBIT 4-2
2010-11 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY
GRADE 4 ITBS – GRADE 3 INTERVENTION GROUPS



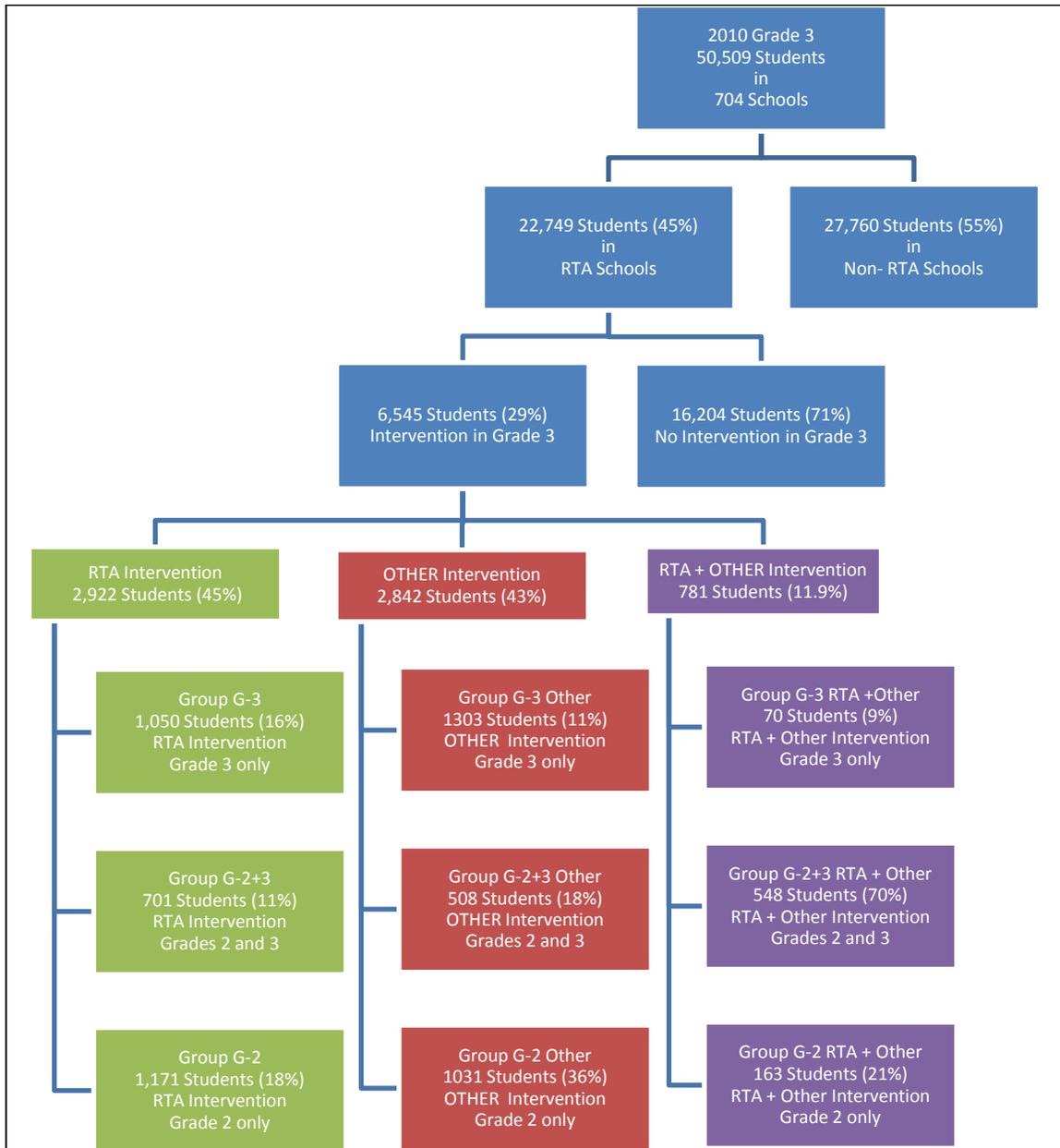
Source: Created by MGT.2011.

Exhibit 4-3 shows the structure of the data gathered and identifies the groups of students who took the ITBS test in third grade and participated in at least one intervention in either or both second and third grades. This exhibit includes the number and percent of students described in **Exhibit 4-1** and also shows the number and percent of students in each of the study groups defined earlier.

There are nine groups of students who participated in reading intervention(s) defined in this exhibit. As shown, there were 6,545 students (29%) in the RTA schools that had an intervention – either RTA, Other, or RTA + Other. The largest group of students 2,922 (45%) had an RTA intervention; 2,842 (43%) had an Other intervention; and 781 (11.9%) had both an RTA and Other intervention.

For each type of intervention, the exhibit shows the number and percent of students who participated in third grade only, second and third grades, or second grade only. The student groups shown in the green boxes participated in an RTA intervention. The student groups shown in the red boxes participated in an Other intervention. The student groups shown in the purple boxes participated in both an RTA + Other intervention.

**EXHIBIT 4-3
2010-11 ACHIEVEMENT STUDY
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 3, GRADE 3+2, AND GRADE 2 INTERVENTION GROUPS**



Source: Created by MGT.2011.

MGT received the 2010 ITBS test file from KDE and identified RTA students using the KDE system of student identification numbers (KSIS) by matching them to the RTA database. MGT used the ITBS data file to develop the demographic profile information.

In order to define the ITBS student scores using the current Kentucky four-tier structure to define proficiency, Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished (NAPD), MGT used information from a 2006 report to KDE by the Human Resources Research

Organization (HRRO) reviewing the accuracy of student NAPD score classifications.¹ The report provided background for the selection of “cut points” for the NAPD classifications based on the ITBS data. Based on the recommendations of HRRO, MGT defined Novice (N) as approximately the lowest 10 percent, Apprentice (A) as the next 20 percent, Proficient (P) as the next 60 percent, and Distinguished (D) as the highest 10 percent. Those students in the Novice and Apprentice categories have not yet met standards. Those students in the Proficient and Distinguished categories are considered meeting or exceeding standards.

There was a significant limitation in that the ITBS data was only available for the year 2009-10. Data for 2010-11 will not be available until September 2011, beyond the scope of this evaluation. Therefore, the statistics presented in this chapter are descriptive only, including number and percent of students in each demographic and achievement category.

This portion of the study does not report students who received interventions in kindergarten through first grades because KSIS was not fully implemented with individual student identification numbers until 2008-09. Any of the students may or may not have also received an intervention in first grade. Data are not available regarding interventions before the 2008-09 school year.

4.1.2 Grade 4 ITBS – Grade 3 Interventions – Group G-4

This section will describe the data for the students who took the ITBS in fourth grade and had an intervention in third grade. It is important to remember that these students may have had one or more interventions in earlier grades, but data are not available on earlier intervention(s).

Exhibits 4-4 and **4-5** show the percent of students scoring at each of the proficiency levels for the three types of interventions, RTA only, Other only, or RTA + Other. As described earlier, the ITBS is not scored based on these proficiency levels. MGT created these proficiency cut points to align the data with the Kentucky scoring system.

As shown, over 50 percent of the students who received any type of intervention scored at the P/D levels, defined as meeting or exceeding standard. The RTA only group had the smallest percent (18%) of students in the Novice group and the largest group approaching standard (31% were in the Apprentice group).

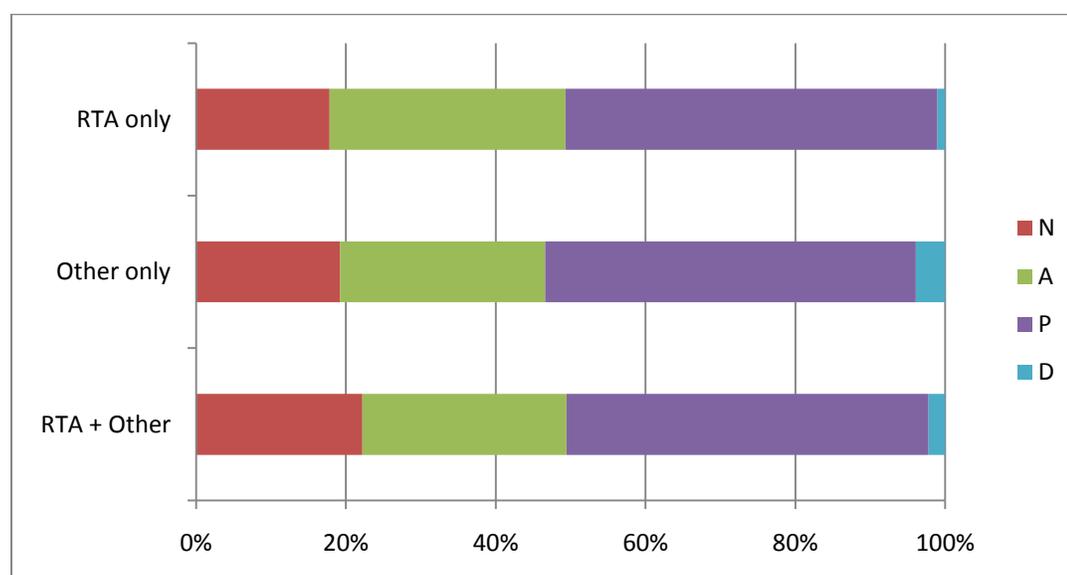
¹ <http://www.education.ky.gov/nr/rdonlyres/34e8e2dc-bc5a-47a1-ac5f-0b04b90acfd0/0/fr0681theaccuracyofstudentsnapdclassificationsforthe2006kcctandaugmentednormreferenc.pdf>

**EXHIBIT 4-4
GRADE 4 ITBS – GRADE 3 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD**

Intervention	n	N	A	P	D
RTA only	1,933	18%	31%	49%	1%
Other only	2,122	19%	27%	49%	4%
RTA + Other	181	22%	27%	48%	2%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

**EXHIBIT 4-5
GRADE 4 ITBS – GRADE 3 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

Exhibits 4-6 and **4-7** show the data and a graphic display of the data for all students who took the ITBS test in spring 2010 when they were in fourth grade, participated in any kind of intervention as a third grade student, and qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch, Disability, or English Language Proficiency status. **Exhibit 4-6** shows the number and percent of students whose performance was at the Proficient or Distinguished levels. **Exhibit 4-7** shows this same data graphically.

As shown, there were 4,236 students who had an intervention in third grade. Of those, 1,933 students had RTA only and 50 percent of those students scored at the P/D levels. The largest group had no RTA intervention, but had some Other intervention. Of those 2,122 students, 53 percent scored at the P/D levels. The smallest group had RTA + Other intervention. Of those 181 students, 50 percent scored at the P/D levels. The exhibit also shows:

- Students who qualified for English Proficiency (EL) were most successful with RTA only, although more EL students were served in Other programs.

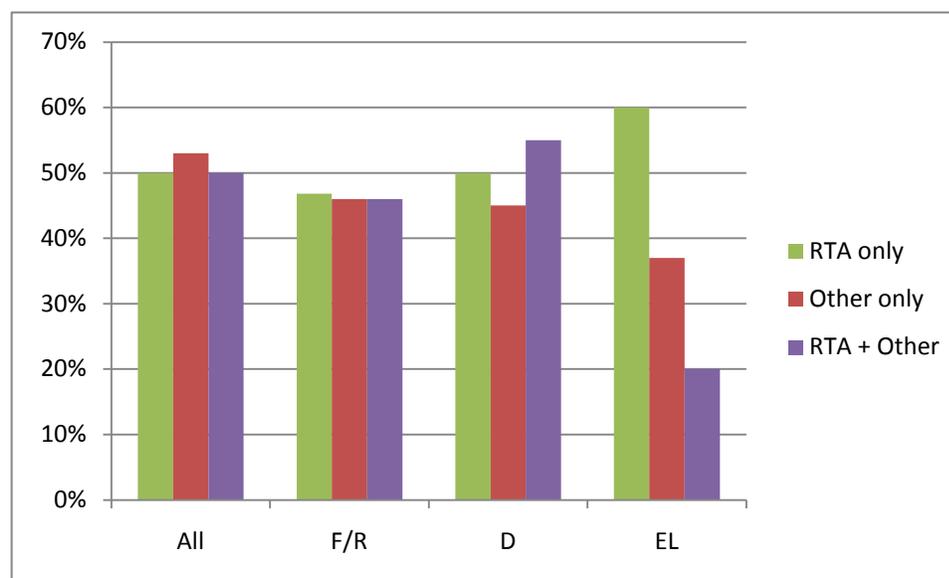
- Students who qualified for Disability (D) status were most successful with RTA + Other, not surprising since most of them would likely also be served by a special education program of some type.

**EXHIBIT 4-6
GRADE 4 ITBS – GRADE 3 INTERVENTIONS
NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED
LEVELS**

Intervention	All Students		Free/Reduced Lunch		Disabled		English Language Proficiency	
	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %
RTA only	1,933	50%	640	47%	364	50%	27	60%
Other only	2,122	53%	710	46%	391	45%	46	37%
RTA + Other	181	50%	64	46%	51	55%	1	20%
Total / Average	4,236		1,414	46%	806	50%	74	39%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

**EXHIBIT 4-7
GRADE 4 ITBS – GRADE 3 INTERVENTION
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

4.1.3 Grade 3 ITBS – Grade 3 Interventions

This section will describe the data for the students who took the ITBS in third grade and had an intervention in third grade. It is important to remember that these students may have had one or more interventions in kindergarten or first grades, but data are not available on earlier intervention(s).

4.1.3.1 Grade 3 Only Interventions – Group G-3

This section will describe the data regarding the students who took the ITBS in third grade and had an intervention in third grade only. It is important to remember that these students may have had one or more interventions in earlier grades, but data are not available regarding the number of years or types of those earlier intervention(s).

Exhibits 4-8 and **4-9** show the percent of students scoring at each of the proficiency levels for the three types of interventions, RTA only, Other only, or RTA + Other. As described earlier, the ITBS is not scored based on these proficiency levels. MGT created these proficiency cut points to align the data with the Kentucky scoring system.

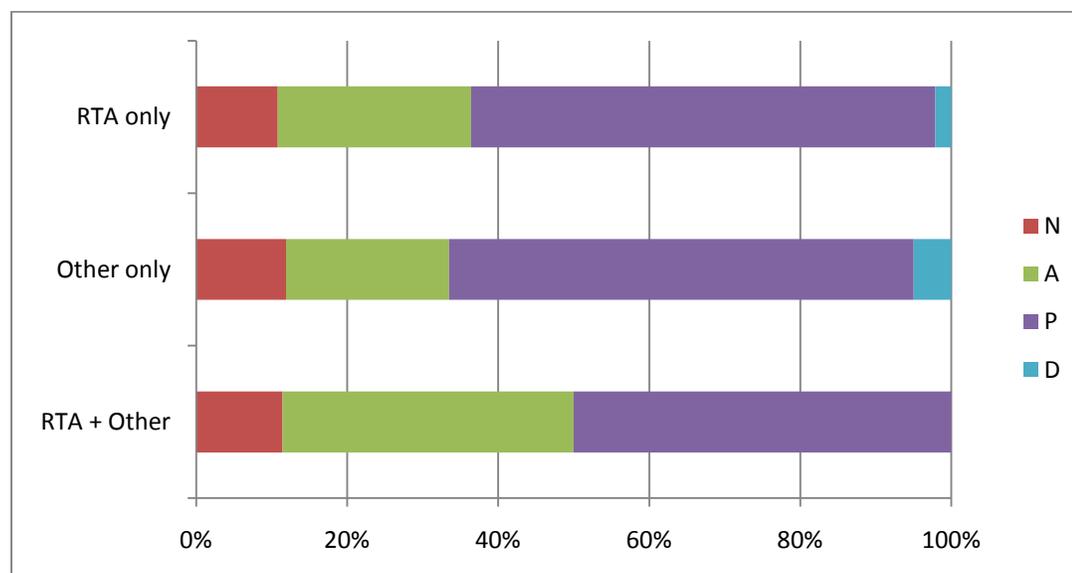
As shown, 50 percent or more of the students who received any type of intervention scored at the P/D levels, defined as meeting or exceeding standard. Additionally, more than 60 percent of the RTA and the Other groups scored at the P/D levels. Two thirds of the Other group (66%) met or exceeded standards. The RTA + Other group had the smallest proportion (50%) who scored at the P/D levels and no students at the Distinguished level.

EXHIBIT 4-8
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 3 ONLY INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD

Intervention	n	N	A	P	D
RTA only	1,050	11%	26%	61%	2%
Other only	1,303	12%	21%	61%	5%
RTA + Other	70	11%	39%	50%	0%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

EXHIBIT 4-9
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 3 ONLY INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

Exhibits 4-10 and **4-11** show the data and a graphic display of the data for all students who qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch (F/R), Disability (D), or English Language Proficiency (EL) status and the number and percent of students whose performance was at the Proficient or Distinguished levels.

As shown, there were 1,956 students who had an intervention in third grade only. Of those, the largest group (1,050 students) had RTA only and 63 percent of those students were at the P/D levels. The smallest group had RTA + Other intervention with 50 students (71%) at the P/D levels. The exhibit also shows:

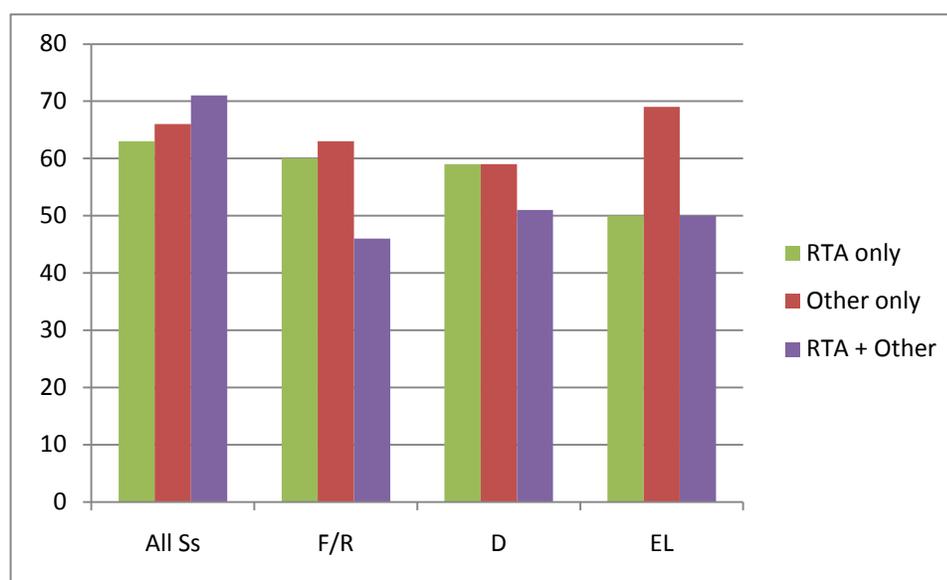
- Among all students, more than 60 percent who had any intervention in third grade scored at the P/D levels and 71 percent of the students who had both RTA and Other interventions scored at the P/D levels.
- Students who qualified for English Proficiency (EL) were most successful when served in Other programs, although the number of students is too small to draw significant conclusions.
- Students who qualified for Disability (D) status were equally successful with RTA and Other, not surprising since most of them would likely also be served by a special education program of some type.
- EL students were most successful in non-RTA programs. These data may connect to the perception of ineffectiveness with EL students reported by the RTA teachers described earlier in the Program Study.
- The largest group of students who qualified for the Free/Reduced (F/R) program were served in Other programs and 63% scored at the P/D levels.

**EXHIBIT 4-10
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 3 ONLY INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**

Intervention	All Students		Free/Reduced Lunch		Disabled		English Language Proficient	
	n	P/D%	n	P/D%	n	P/D%	n	P/D%
RTA only	1,050	63%	442	60%	207	59%	19	50%
Other only	856	66%	623	63%	326	59%	48	69%
RTA + Other	50	71%	25	46%	20	51%	1	50%
Total / Average	1,956		1,090	56%	553	56%	68	56%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

**EXHIBIT 4-11
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 3 ONLY INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

4.1.3.2 Grades 3 + 2 Interventions – Group G-3 + 2

This section will describe the data regarding the students who took the ITBS in third grade and had an intervention in both second and third grades. It is important to remember that these students may have had one or more interventions in kindergarten or first grade, but data are not available regarding the number of years or types of earlier intervention(s).

Exhibits 4-12 and 4-13 show the percent of students scoring at each of the proficiency levels for the three types of interventions, RTA only, Other only, or RTA + Other. As described earlier, the ITBS is not scored based on these proficiency levels. MGT created these proficiency cut points to align the data with the Kentucky scoring system.

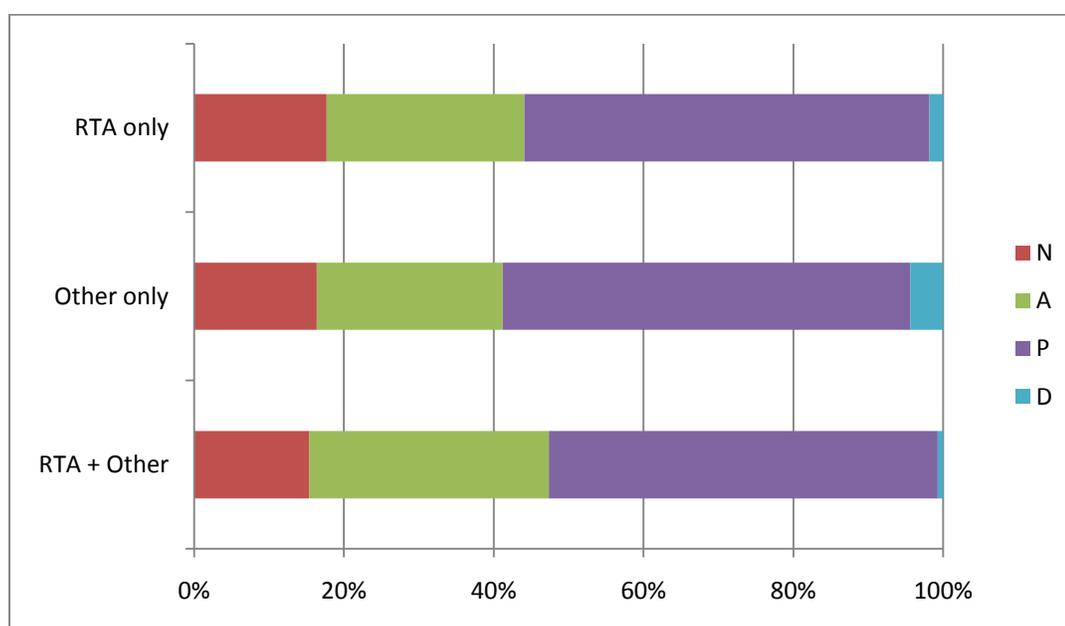
As shown, over 50 percent of the students who received any type of intervention in both second and third grades scored at the P/D levels, defined as meeting or exceeding standards. The RTA + Other group had the smallest proportion (15%) of students in the Novice group.

**EXHIBIT 4-12
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADES 3 + 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD**

Intervention	n	N	A	P	D
RTA only	701	18%	26%	54%	2%
Other only	508	16%	24%	54%	4%
RTA + Other	548	15%	32%	52%	1%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

**EXHIBIT 4-13
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADES 3 + 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

Exhibits 4-14 and 4-15 show the data and a graphic display of the data for all students who qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch (F/R), Disability (D), or English Language Proficiency (EL) status and the number and percent of students whose performance was at the Proficient or Distinguished levels.

As shown, there were 1,757 students who had an intervention in second and third grades. The largest group (701 students) had RTA intervention only; the smallest group (508 students) had an Other intervention only, but those students had the highest percent meeting the P/D levels (58%). The exhibit also shows:

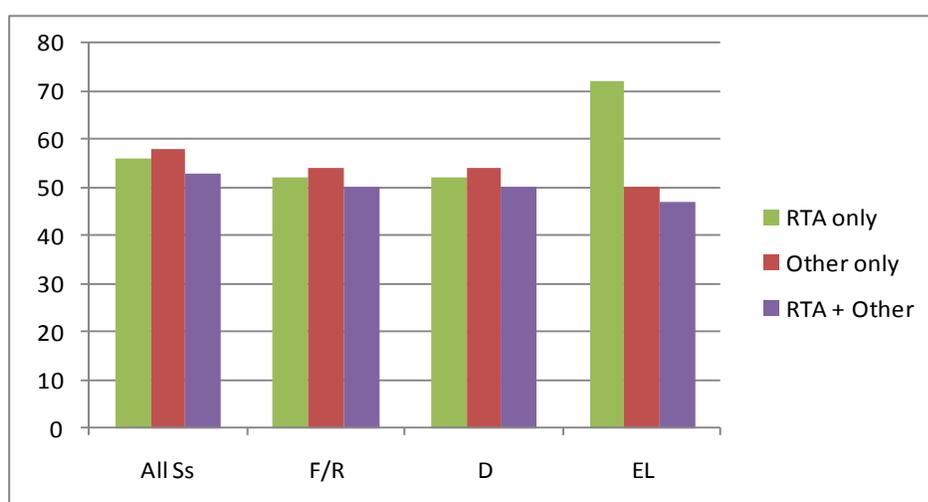
- Among all students, more than 50% achieved at the P/D levels, regardless of the program of intervention.
- The least successful group was the RTA + Other students with 50 percent or fewer of each of the sub-groups scored at the P/D levels.
- Students who qualified for Disability (D) status were most successful with Other, not surprising since most of them would likely be served by a special education program of some type.
- EL students were most successful in RTA programs. These data do not correlate to the perception of ineffectiveness with EL students reported by the RTA teachers described earlier in the Program Study.

**EXHIBIT 4-14
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADES 3 + 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**

Intervention	ALL Students		F/R		D		EL	
	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %
RTA only	701	56%	267	52%	148	52%	16	72%
Other only	508	58%	210	54%	145	54%	14	50%
RTA + Other	548	53%	197	50%	127	50%	7	47%
Total / Average	1,757		674	52%	420	52%	37	56%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT

**EXHIBIT 4-15
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADES 3 + 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

4.1.3.3 Grade 2 Interventions – Group G-2

This section will describe the data regarding the students who took the ITBS in third grade but only had an intervention in second grade. It is important to remember that these students may have had one or more interventions in kindergarten or first grade, but data are not available regarding the number of years or types of those earlier intervention(s).

Exhibits 4-16 and **4-17** show the percent of students scoring at each of the proficiency levels for the three types of interventions, RTA only, Other only, or RTA + Other. As described earlier, the ITBS is not scored based on these proficiency levels. MGT created these proficiency cut points to align the data with the Kentucky scoring system.

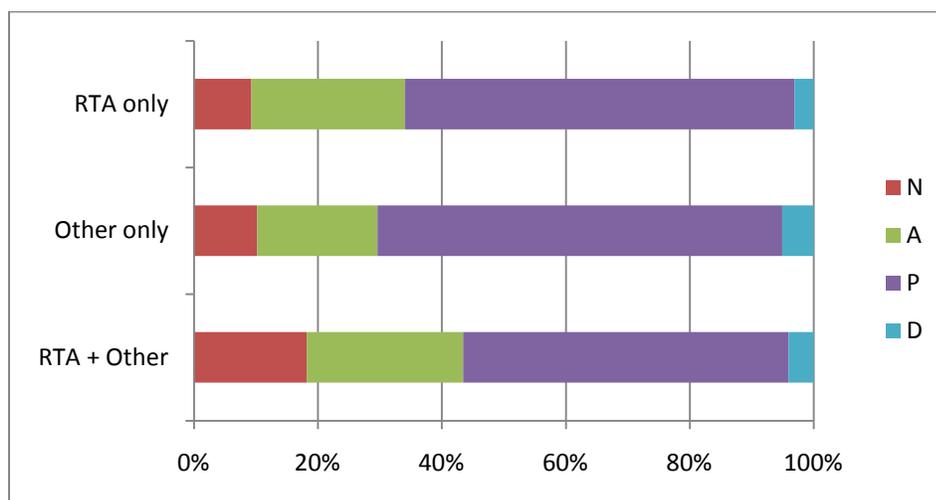
As shown, over 50 percent of the students who received any type of intervention in second grade scored at the P/D levels, defined as meeting or exceeding standards, and the RTA only and Other only groups had more than 60 percent at the P/D levels. The RTA only group had the largest number of students, and the smallest proportion (9%) of students at the Novice level.

EXHIBIT 4-16
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD

Intervention	n	N	A	P	D
RTA only	1,171	9%	24%	61%	3%
Other only	1,031	10%	19%	64%	5%
RTA + Other	163	18%	25%	52%	4%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

EXHIBIT 4-17
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENCY LEVELS NAPD



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

Exhibits 4-18 and 4-19 show the data and a graphic display of the data for all students who qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch (F/R), Disability (D), or English Language Proficiency (EL) status and the number and percent of students whose performance was at the Proficient or Distinguished (P/D) levels.

As shown, there were 2,365 students who had an intervention in second grade. The largest group (1,171 students) had RTA intervention only; the smallest group (163 students) had RTA + Other intervention. Students in the Other intervention group had the highest percent meeting the P/D levels (69%) The exhibit also shows:

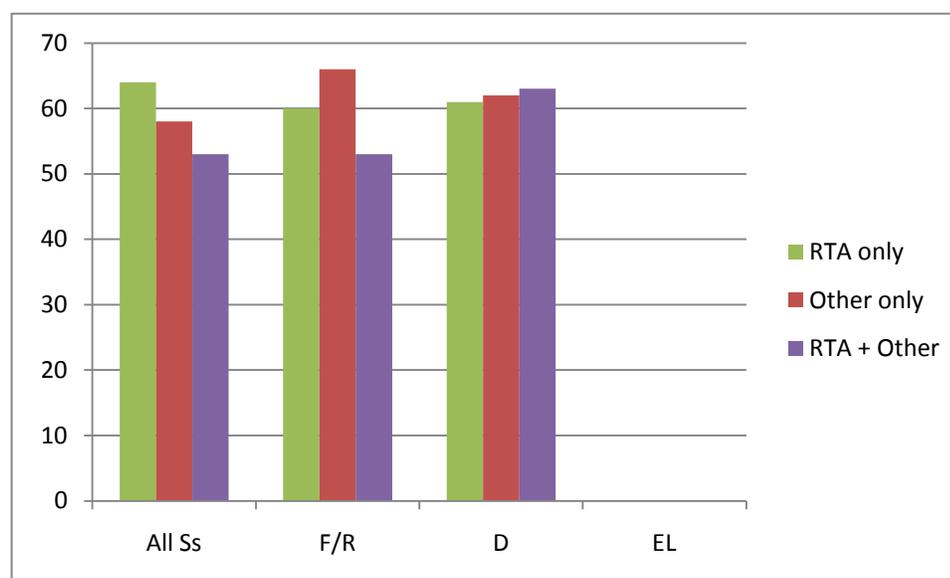
- Among all students, more than 56% achieved at the P/D levels, regardless of the program of intervention.
- The least successful group was the RTA + Other students with 56 percent meeting the P/D levels.
- Students who qualified for Disability (D) status were slightly more successful with RTA + Other, not surprising since most of them would likely be served by a special education program of some type.
- There were no EL students who took the third grade ITBS and had an intervention in second grade only.
- The largest group of students qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch and participated in the Other intervention group. Sixty-six percent achieved at the P/D levels.

**EXHIBIT 4-18
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS**

Intervention	All Students		Free/Reduced Lunch		Disabled		English Language Proficient	
	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %	n	P/D %
RTA only	1,171	64%	468	60%	242	61%	0	
Other only	1,031	69%	470	66%	234	62%	0	
RTA + Other	163	56%	62	53%	45	63%	0	
Total / Average	2,365		1000	60%	521	62%	0	

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT

EXHIBIT 4-19
GRADE 3 ITBS – GRADE 2 INTERVENTIONS
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT PROFICIENT/DISTINGUISHED LEVELS



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

These data for second grade are impressive, with more than 50 percent of all students meeting or exceeding standard, regardless of their status in any of the program groups and regardless of the type of intervention.

4.1.4 ITBS Summary

Exhibits 4-4 through **4-19** provided information about the Kentucky students in third and fourth grades who took the ITBS in the spring of 2010. Students who took the ITBS in fourth grade received RTA intervention the previous year when they were in third grade (**Group G-4**). Students who took the ITBS in third grade could have received intervention in third grade only (**Group G-3**), or both second and third grades (**Group G-2+3**), or second grade only (**Group G-2**). These groups were further divided based on whether the intervention was RTA, Other, or RTA + Other.

To more easily see any relationships and draw conclusions, MGT combined the data from the four main study groups into one exhibit. **Exhibit 4-20** shows the achievement performance of the four groups, regardless of the type of intervention provided. As shown,

- **Group G-4** had the smallest percent of students in the P/D levels (52%). These students received intervention in the previous year. They may have received support in fourth grade, but not from RTA.
- **Group G-3** had more students in the P/D levels than **Group G-2+3**, but not as many as **Group G-2**. These students received RTA intervention in their current year (third grade), but not in second grade.

- **Group G-2+3** had a relatively high percent of students scoring at the Novice level (17%) and a relatively low percent scoring at the P/D levels (55%). These students received RTA intervention in both second and third grades.
- **Group G-2** had the highest percent (66%) of students scoring at the Proficient and Distinguished (P/D) levels. These students received RTA intervention one year earlier, when they were in second grade and did not continue in RTA or receive any other identified intervention in third grade.

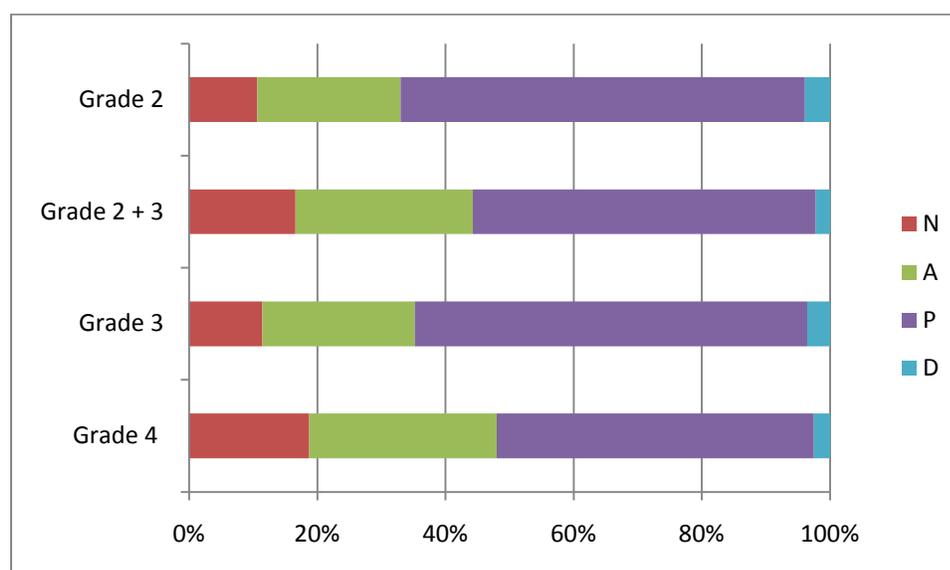
**EXHIBIT 4-20
SUMMARY
GROUPS G-4, G-3, G-2+3 AND G-2
ITBS SPRING 2010**

Intervention Group	n	N	A	P	D
G - 4	4,236	18%	29%	49%	3%
G - 3	2,423	11%	24%	61%	4%
G - 2 + 3	1,757	17%	28%	53%	2%
G - 2	2,365	10%	22%	62%	4%

Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

Exhibit 4-21 provides a graphic display of the data in **Exhibit 4-20**. The data show that students who received intervention in one year only, in either second grade or third grade, achieved higher levels of success than students who received intervention for two years.

**EXHIBIT 4-21
SUMMARY
GROUPS G-4, G-3, G-2+3 AND G-2
ITBS SPRING 2010**



Source: KDE 2010 data, compiled by MGT.

It appears that students who only needed intervention in second grade either began the program at a more advanced reading level or gained more from the intervention than students in the other two groups. These data suggest that early intervention is critical to student success and that continued monitoring is essential.

4.2 Student Achievement Data - Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

In order to determine the level of reading improvement in selected RTA schools during one school year, MGT gathered information about the use of the MAP assessment in 142 RTA schools and described the fall to spring progress of RTA students at the six site visit schools as measured by the Reading subtest. The MAP assessment is a product of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). It is a computer-based, online assessment that can be administered in the fall, winter, and spring to students in kindergarten through 12th grades. Kindergarten students use headphones and the test is read to them.

Data regarding the use of the MAP were gathered from the 30 telephone interview schools and from the six site visit schools. The data included how the MAP is used at the school, the grade levels involved, and the use of the data with students and families. A review and description of the use of the MAP test is presented in **Appendix C**.

MGT received permission to access student MAP data from each of the six site visit schools/districts and 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, kindergarten through third grade, who met the grade level RIT score target.

“RIT” is an abbreviation for Rasch Unit, named for George Rasch, a Danish mathematician.² RIT scores are defined by the publisher as, “... a curriculum scale that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement. The RIT scale is used to measure how ‘tall’ a student is on the curriculum scale and scores can be compared to tell how much growth a student has made, similar to measuring height on a yard-stick. This score is independent of the age or grade of the student, and reflects the instructional level at which the student is currently performing.”³

The target RIT scores shown below were based on the publisher’s RIT to Percentile Rank Conversion charts⁴, approximating the Kentucky standards for Novice (lowest 20%), Apprentice (next 10%), Proficient (next 60%) and Distinguished (highest 10%).

Exhibit 4-22 shows the cut points used by MGT to identify the percent of students who met the RIT target by grade level. The RIT score levels are aligned to the Kentucky standards described earlier. The target RIT score matches approximately the 30th percentile on the RIT score table for each grade level. Students who score at or above this RIT target score could be expected to score in the Proficient or Distinguished levels on the KCCT.

² <http://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/faqs/index.aspx?=88>

³ NWEA.org

⁴ *ibid*

EXHIBIT 4-22
RIT SCORE TARGETS BY GRADE AND TESTING DATE

Grade	Fall / Winter RIT Target Score	Spring RIT Target Score
Kindergarten	143 / 147 ¹	150
1 st	153	166
2 nd	170	182
3 rd	183	192

Source: MGT based on NWEA 2008 RIT Scale Norms.

¹ Some kindergarten classes only did testing in winter and spring

The MAP data gathered and reported in **Exhibits 4-23** through **4-26** show the average RIT score for each testing window and the number and percent of students (Ss) at the six site visit schools who met the fall (or winter, for kindergarten only) and spring target RIT scores. Although all of these six schools are considered “RTA schools,” within each school, only a portion of the students enrolled at each grade is served by the RTA program. The RTA group is comprised of the lowest performing students who need intervention and support to make progress. The data show the scores separately for RTA and non-RTA students.

Exhibit 4-23 shows the data for the students in kindergarten. Some schools chose to conduct the MAP assessment in the fall. The fall test window is late September to early October. A principal commented, “*We were not sure if the fall test would work, but kids are so computer savvy, we decided to try. It seemed okay.*” Other schools waited until the winter test window – December – to assess the reading performance of their kindergarten students. One teacher commented, “*We were afraid they would cry. They hardly know how to get into a straight line. We decided to wait to test them.*”

Regardless of when the students were tested, RTA teachers began working with kindergarten students in the fall and provided the RTA intervention program chosen by the school as early as possible. As shown,

- **Fall Testing:** Sixty students completed MAP testing in the fall. Of the students tested, 68 percent of the non-RTA supported students met the target, while 43 percent of the RTA students met the target. The average RIT score for the RTA students was lower than the non-RTA students. Since RTA exists to assist students who need additional support, these numbers are to be expected.
- **Winter Testing:** Twenty-two students were tested in the winter. A significantly higher percentage of the RTA students met the winter target, 64 percent as compared to 56 percent of the non-RTA students.
- **Spring Testing:** Seventy-eight students were tested in the spring. The scores of the RTA and non-RTA students were closely matched. The non-RTA students had a slightly higher average RIT score of 164 compared to the RTA students at 162, but 86 percent of both groups met the spring RIT score target.

EXHIBIT 4-23
RIT SCORES FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS
FALL / WINTER TO SPRING 2010-11

	Fall n	Fall Average RIT	Fall # Ss Meeting Target	Fall % Ss Meeting Target	Winter n	Winter Average RIT	Winter # Ss Meeting Target	Winter % Ss Meeting Target	Spring n	Spring Average RIT	Spring # Ss Meeting Target	Spring % Ss Meeting Target
RIT Target		143				147				150		
RTA	60	143	26	43%	22	149	14	64%	78	162	67	86%
Non- RTA	126	147	86	68%	98	149	55	56%	222	164	190	86%

Source: District MAP fall to spring 2011 grade level reports, compiled by MGT.

Exhibit 4-24 shows the MAP data for the students in first grade. At the six schools visited, all students took the MAP test in the fall and the spring, with the exception of mid-year transfer students. MGT staff had an opportunity to observe spring testing during the site visit in several schools. Students were observed walking into the computer lab with their goal cards. They logged in and went right to work. The MAP assessment questions are based on the Kentucky standards, but the computer system adjusts the level and type of question based on individual student performance and no two students were working on the same question at the same time. One student wrestled with a rhyming question while another had to identify the definition of “onomatopoeia”. At the end of the session, most of the students were smiling and happy because most of them had hit their personal goal and made the targeted reading gains.

As shown, there were 111 RTA students tested in the fall and 110 in the spring. The average fall RIT score for RTA students was 149, significantly lower than the average RIT score for non-RTA students (165). Since RTA serves the lowest performing students, this difference is to be expected. On the spring assessment, 68 percent of the RTA students met the RIT score target, compared to 94 percent of the non-RTA students. A lower percentage of first grade RTA students met their target than the kindergarten group, however, 30 percent more of the first graders served through RTA were able to meet the target in the spring, compared to the fall assessment.

**EXHIBIT 4-24
RIT SCORES FOR GRADE 1 STUDENTS
FALL TO SPRING 2010-11**

	Fall n	Fall Average RIT	Fall # Ss Meeting Target	Fall % Ss Meeting Target	Spring n	Spring Average RIT	Spring # Ss Meeting Target	Spring % Ss Meeting Target
RIT Target		153				166		
RTA	111	149	42	38%	110	169	75	68%
Non- RTA	377	165	333	88%	356	184	335	94%

Source: District MAP fall to spring 2011 grade level reports, compiled by MGT.

Exhibit 4-25 shows the MAP data for students in second grade. At the six schools visited, all students took the MAP test in the fall and the spring, with the exception of mid-year transfer students. As shown, 92 RTA students took the test in the fall and 98 took it in the spring. The fall average RIT score for RTA students was significantly below the average RIT score for the non-RTA students. Only 30 RTA students, or 33 percent, met the fall target. In the spring, almost 50 percent of the RTA students met the RIT score target, compared to 86 percent of the non-RTA students.

**EXHIBIT 4-25
RIT SCORES FOR GRADE 2 STUDENTS
FALL TO SPRING 2010-11**

	Fall n	Fall Average RIT	Fall # Ss Meeting Target	Fall % Ss Meeting Target	Spring n	Spring Average RIT	Spring # Ss Meeting Target	Spring % Ss Meeting Target
RIT Target		170				182		
RTA	92	164	30	33%	98	180	48	49%
Non-RTA	344	180	256	74%	364	196	312	86%

Source: District MAP fall to spring 2011 grade level reports, compiled by MGT.

Exhibit 4-26 shows the MAP data for students in third grade. At the six schools visited, all students in third grade took the MAP test in the fall and the spring, with the exception of the mid-year transfer students. As shown, 65 RTA students took the test in the fall and 68 in the spring. Only 30 percent of the RTA students met the RIT target in the fall, but nearly 60 percent met the target in the spring.

EXHIBIT 4-26
RIT SCORES FOR GRADE 3 STUDENTS
FALL TO SPRING 2010-11

	Fall n	Fall Average RIT	Fall # Ss Meeting Target	Fall % Ss Meeting Target	Spring n	Spring Average RIT	Spring # Ss Meeting Target	Spring % Ss Meeting Target
RIT Target		183				192		
RTA	66	178	20	30%	68	192	40	59%
Non-RTA	405	193	323	80%	393	204	350	89%

Source: District MAP fall to spring 2011 grade level reports, compiled by MGT.

The individual grade level data compared RTA to non-RTA students. As expected, the data showed that the RTA students in all grades started with lower average RIT scores. By the end of kindergarten, the RTA and non-RTA students were at nearly identical levels of performance. Unfortunately, the performance levels for RTA students in first through third grades are not as closely matched to the non-RTA students. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine whether the students in first through third grades are new to RTA or have had any earlier interventions. With more than 140 RTA schools now using the MAP, it may be beneficial for future studies to use MAP data to track the progress of these students over time using their RIT scores.

Exhibit 4-27 examines the data relative to the NWEA's national norming sample. The exhibit includes the average RIT score from the RTA students in the fall (or winter for kindergarten only) and spring testing cycles and the NWEA-derived percentile rank, based on the 2008 RIT Scale Norms. The table also shows the NWEA growth estimates for fall to spring, based on a starting RIT score for second and third grades. NWEA does not provide a growth estimate for kindergarten and first grade.

As shown, the average RIT score for kindergarten students was at the 27th percentile (PR) in the fall (RIT 143), 36th in the winter (RIT 149), and 76th in the spring (RIT 162). For first grade students, the average score improved from the 15th percentile in the fall (RIT 149) to the 38th percentile in the spring (RIT 169). Second grade students started the farthest behind and averaged the smallest gains, improving from the 12th to the 24th percentile (scores of 164 and 180 respectively). Second grade students did not achieve the RIT Growth Estimate provided by NWEA, with actual growth of 16.0 RIT points, compared to 17.4 estimated. Third grade students started at the 17th percentile in the fall (RTI 178) and ended at the 29th percentile in the spring (RIT 192). Third grade students exceeded the RIT Growth Estimate provided by NWEA.

EXHIBIT 4-27
MAP TEST – RTA STUDENTS
MEAN RIT TO PERCENTILE RANK COMPARISON
FALL 2010 TO SPRING 2011

	Kindergarten		Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3	
	Average RIT	PR	Average RIT	PR	Average RIT	PR	Average RIT	PR
Fall	143	27 th	149	15 th	164	12 th	178	17 th
Winter	149	36 th						
Spring	162	76 th	169	38 th	180	24 th	192	29 th
RIT Growth Estimate	NA				17.4		11.5	
RIT Growth Actual					16.0		14.0	

Source: District MAP fall to spring 2011 grade level reports, compiled by MGT and NWEA
¹NWEA. 2008 RIT Scale Norms. NWEA.org.

The MAP data show that a majority of the RTA students are making progress over the instructional year, with varying success for different grade levels. Kindergarten RTA students are most likely to have caught up to their non-RTA peers by the end of the academic year. Second grade RTA students are least likely, based on the data showing that they did not meet the RIT Growth Estimate. This analysis is based on one year only, and multi-year data may provide a different picture.

The MAP data presented here represent a relatively small sample of the entire RTA population of students who took the MAP and an even smaller sample of the total RTA population. However, the MAP test may be a useful tool for future evaluations of RTA, since the assessment is closely aligned to the KY standards, uses a RIT score that allows easy analysis of growth over time, and provides data within hours of test administration.

4.3 Findings

MGT reviewed student achievement data from the ITBS for all students in third and fourth grades and the MAP data from selected sites for students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. The following findings are a result of that review.

4.3.1 ITBS Test Data

For this part of the Achievement Study, MGT gathered data about students who had received RTA support in second and or third grades and measured their performance on the ITBS administered in spring 2010, the latest year for which data are available. The goal was to answer the question:

To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?

- Students who received intervention only in second grade were more likely to perform at the Proficient or Distinguished levels than students who received

intervention in either third grade or both second and third grades. The students who received intervention in only third grade were more likely to perform at higher levels than those who had two years of interventions (intervention in both second and third 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.

4.3.2 MAP Test Data

MGT gathered the fall (or winter for kindergarten) and spring MAP test data from the six site visit schools to answer the question:

For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

- The lowest achieving students are being served. The fall RIT scores for RTA students are lower than for the non-RTA students.
- A majority of students are making progress and meeting standards. With the exception of second grade, more than 50 percent of the RTA students met the RIT standard, based on the spring MAP test.
- The gap between achieving and non-achieving students in kindergarten and third grades is narrowing. The kindergarten spring scores were nearly identical for both RTA and non-RTA students. The third grade students exceeded the NWEA Growth Estimate for the average initial RIT score.

4.4 Strengths and Limitations of the Achievement Study

The Achievement Study was limited by the lack of complete, longitudinal data sets for the ITBS portion of the achievement study. The ITBS has been used for two years, 2009-10 and 2010-11. However, the 2010-11 data will not be available until late September and beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, MGT's analysis of student achievement includes only descriptive statistics, since there is only one data point.

The KSIS has only had individually-identifiable student numbers since 2008-09. Although the RTA database contains older data, the lack of KSIS numbers made it impossible to search for records on students who had received support prior to 2008-09. For the ITBS study, students may or may not have received an RTA intervention in kindergarten or first grade, but there were no records to connect them with the intervention.

This portion of the study was strengthened by the support from the six schools visited and staff at KDE. The student achievement data for the MAP test was provided directly by the staff at the six site visit schools or the district office. Having all the data in the same format and structure made the analysis more efficient and accurate. KDE program staff were able to provide detailed student demographic data for the English Language Proficiency and Disabled program areas and to facilitate the data transfers of the large testing and KSIS files. MGT appreciates the assistance of teachers and staff throughout the district in providing data in a manner that improved the efficiency of the study itself.

5.0 SUMMARY

5.0 SUMMARY

MGT conducted this evaluation of the RTA program for the 2010-11 school year. The evaluation included two components: **Program Study** and **Achievement Study**. The goals of the **Program Study** were to define the RTA schools in comparison to non-RTA schools in the state, to explore the selected program(s) or intervention(s) chosen at the schools, and to understand RTA as part of a larger system of support for struggling readers.

The goal of the **Achievement Study** was to determine whether student achievement gains made through RTA were sustained over time using two measures: Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

This chapter will summarize the strengths and limitations of the two areas of study and report the findings from the two studies. The chapter includes recommendations for the RTA program and concludes with some possible areas for future evaluations.

5.1 Strengths and Limitations

MGT conducted the 2010-11 evaluation of the RTA program using data gathered from multiple sources, including personal interviews and state-wide databases. The strengths and limitations for the two areas of study are outlined here.

5.1.1 Program Study

The **Program Study** was conducted using data from a variety of sources, including the Evaluation III Report gathered electronically from all RTA schools, telephone interviews from 30 sites, and six site visits. Having data from all RTA sites was critical to understanding all sites and exploring the differences.

MGT also gathered data from the KDE website. Some of the schools that had RTA grants have now closed or been combined with other schools. MGT had incomplete data from some schools, reducing the data set for all schools from 785 to 768 and for RTA schools from 324 to 314.

The data for the telephone interviews and six site visits were gathered from a stratified, random sample and provided important qualitative information to understand individual differences or issues within the electronic data. Having this variety of data from both comprehensive and random data sources significantly strengthened the validity of the data collected and reduced the data limitations.

5.1.2 Achievement Study

The **Achievement Study** was limited by the lack of complete, longitudinal data sets for the ITBS portion of the achievement study. The ITBS has been used for two years, 2009-10 and 2010-11. However, the 2010-11 data will not be available until late September and beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, MGT's analysis of student achievement includes only descriptive statistics, since there is only one data point.

The Kentucky State Information System (KSIS) has only had individually-identifiable student numbers (SSID) since 2008-09. Although the RTA database contains data from prior years, the lack of KSIS numbers made it impossible to search for records on students who had received support prior to 2008-09. For the ITBS study, students may or may not have received an RTA intervention in kindergarten or first grade, but there were no records to connect them with the intervention.

This portion of the study was strengthened by the support from the six schools visited and staff at KDE. The student achievement data for the MAP test was provided directly by the staff at the six site visit schools or the district office. Having all the data in the same format and structure made the analysis more efficient and accurate. KDE program staff were able to provide detailed student demographic data for the English Language Proficiency and Disabled program areas and to facilitate the data transfers of the large testing and KSIS files.

5.2 Findings and Recommendations for RTA

The findings presented below are based on the data gathered from multiple sources to answer the research questions developed in collaboration with CCLD for the two study areas. The **Program Study** examined differences between RTA and non-RTA schools, identified issues with chosen interventions, and explored the system of support for struggling readers. The **Achievement Study** examined student achievement using the ITBS and MAP tests to determine program effectiveness.

Each of the findings provides a summation of the data presented and is followed by a specific recommendation intended to inform the RTA program in the future.

5.2.1 Program Study

The **Program Study** looked at the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools, including student demographics and student achievement?
2. What are the chosen intervention(s) and how committed are staff to maintaining the intervention(s)?
3. Is there an overall system of support for struggling readers at the RTA school and how does RTA fit into that system?

The findings and RTA program recommendations from the **Program Study** are detailed in the following sub-sections.

5.2.1.1 Characteristics of RTA and non-RTA schools

- RTA schools have higher percentages of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (F/R) and slightly higher percentages of students who qualify for the English Language Proficiency (EL) program. Staff reported confidence working with students who qualify for Free or Reduced lunch (F/R) , but a large

percentage of RTA staff indicated less confidence in meeting the needs of EL students.

- **There should be a state-wide focus on supporting RTA teachers who are working with students who qualify for the English Language Proficiency program.**
- Student achievement is highest in schools that have been part of the RTA program for at least three years. This finding suggests that the RTA requirements—having highly trained intervention staff, using early reading intervention programs which offer short-term, intensive instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency, and participating in a variety of required professional development activities— have school-wide benefits, not just benefits for the students involved in the RTA program.
- **Schools with existing RTA programs that meet any new program requirements should receive continued support and RTA initiatives should be added to new schools as funds become available.**
- The relationship between student achievement and poverty are different in RTA and non-RTA schools. MGT plotted the data sets for RTA and non-RTA schools, comparing the percent of students who qualify for F/R lunch to the percent of students at the highest achievement levels. Neither correlation is strong, There is little difference between the two groups and there are both RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively low F/R populations and correspondingly low KCCT scores as well as RTA and non-RTA schools with relatively high F/R populations and high KCCT scores. Future RTA evaluations may benefit from further exploration of the RTA schools that appear to be exceeding expected performance compared to other schools. The schools whose data point is above the line of regression are beating the odds: they have high levels of student poverty and are still able to produce high levels of student achievement.
- **RTA should award RTA funding through grants based on need rather than through competitive grants.**

5.2.1.2 Chosen Interventions

- Twenty percent of the RTA schools report that they would like to consider a different intervention at one or more grade levels. Some schools chose the intervention program or materials seven years ago, and they are more informed consumers now. Other schools may have only recently selected a program, but are not seeing the improvement they had expected.
- **RTA should develop a process for schools to provide a research or data-based request for a change in intervention program(s) as part of the grant renewal structure.**
- Some of the intervention programs used at the schools do not use materials that are aligned to state performance levels. Teachers and principals reported

having no information whether what students were reading was at an appropriate level of difficulty.

- **RTA should only approve grant applications that propose the use of intervention programs that include materials that are aligned to state performance levels to allow more effective monitoring of student progress.**

5.2.1.3 System of Support

- Most schools reported having a system of support for struggling readers, but the most successful schools did not identify an RTA Team. In those schools, RTA is only one of several programs of support and they are more likely to talk about a literacy team or a data team. Student performance and improvement are responsibilities shared by everyone in the school, not just the RTA teacher.
 - **RTA should work closely with other intervention program areas at KDE (EL, Disability, etc.) to support the RTI structure so the progress of all students is monitored regularly.**
- It was reported that funding for the RTA program changes late in each budget year. It is hard to create a stable system of support when funding for important intervention programs – like RTA – is unpredictable from year to year.
 - **RTA should provide stability in funding for at least the biennial budget cycle to enable schools to adequately prepare and monitor programs.**

5.2.2 Achievement Study

The **Achievement Study** looked at the following research questions:

1. To what extent do students who receive RTA intervention maintain or improve their reading performance over time?
2. For selected RTA schools, what is the improvement in reading achievement over a school year?

The findings and RTA program recommendations from the **Achievement Study** are presented in the following sub-sections.

5.2.2.1 Maintain or Improve Reading Performance Over Time – ITBS Data

- Students who received intervention only in second grade were more likely to perform at the Proficient or Distinguished levels than students who received intervention in either third grade or both second and third grades. The students who received intervention in only third grade were more likely to perform at higher levels than those who had two years of interventions (intervention in both second and third 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.

- **RTA should continue to focus on early intervention and should require schools to provide interventions at all primary grades.**

5.2.2.2 Improvement in Reading Achievement - MAP Test Data

- The lowest achieving students are being served. The fall RIT scores for RTA students are lower than for the non-RTA students.
 - A majority of students are making progress and meeting standards. With the exception of second grade, more than 50 percent of the RTA students met the RIT standard, based on the spring MAP test.
 - The gap between achieving and non-achieving students in kindergarten and third grades is narrowing. The kindergarten spring scores were nearly identical for both RTA and non-RTA students. The third grade students exceeded the NWEA Growth Estimate for the average initial RIT score.
- **RTA should request MAP scores from all RTA schools and use the assessment data to assess long-term trends in student achievement.**

5.3 Recommendations for Future Evaluations

Monitor and Report Student Achievement

RTA provides important intervention support to students in Kentucky, but has lacked effective tools to monitor and report student success. The 2010-11 evaluation used data from two achievement tests, the ITBS and the MAP test. The ITBS will not be useful in the future because it was administered for only two years. However, the MAP test appears to be a valuable tool for both the schools and for future RTA evaluations.

There are currently at least 140 RTA schools using the MAP test. The MAP is correlated to the Kentucky standards and will have a new standards alignment study completed in 2011. The MAP score (the RIT score) extends to twelfth grade, well beyond the RTA grades (kindergarten through third). Since many districts are using the MAP to test all students, the data would show progress over time.

MGT recommends that future evaluations of student achievement include the MAP test data as a means of measuring student growth over time.

Monitor RTA Teacher Training and Confidence

RTA teachers are typically an experienced and well-trained group of teachers. The data reported in this evaluation show significant initial and current year training. However, there were differences regarding the amount of training, depending on the program(s) being implemented, and there were differences regarding levels of teacher confidence. Of special note was the lack of confidence reported by many teachers regarding improving the reading level of students who qualified for English Language Proficiency

(EL) status. Although this group is relatively small, the number of students in this group has been increasing and will likely continue to grow.

MGT recommends that future evaluations continue to gather data about training and confidence levels to determine if focused training in support of EL students has been provided and has been effective in improving confidence of teachers to support these students. The evaluation should include data about the improved reading performance of the students.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A-1

***ELECTRONIC SURVEY
REPORT III***

APPENDIX A-1 ELECTRONIC SURVEY REPORT III

The electronic survey was sent from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to all 324 RTA schools in May 2011. The Report III included questions developed by the Read To Achieve (RTA) staff at KDE and questions developed by MGT for use in the 2010-2011 evaluation report. RTA staff at each site completed the report and submitted it electronically to MGT prior to the close of school. The data was compiled by MGT staff using Microsoft Excel.

Read to Achieve: Reading Diagnostic & Intervention Grant

Program Evaluation Report III

1.0 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Principal Name:

Describe the role of the principal in your school's RTA intervention program:

Data Coordinator Name:

Describe the role of the data coordinator in your school's RTA intervention program:

2.0 STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR INTERVENTION SERVICES

In the table below, please enter a number in every box even if the number is 0.

Total and Eligible Students	Number of students
Total number of students enrolled in grades K-3 as of 4/15/11	<input type="text"/>
Number of ELIGIBLE students	<input type="text"/>
Number successfully exiting RTA instruction by the end of March 2011.	<input type="text"/>
Number currently receiving intervention instruction from RTA-funded intervention teacher(s) as of 4/1/11	<input type="text"/>

3.0 INTERVENTION APPROACH - requires districts to select an intervention strategy for a specific grade when you applied for funding. The questions below deal with the RTA-funded intervention(s) you are using at your school.

3.1 Please identify the grade levels for which your RTA grant was written. (Check all that apply)

- K
- 1
- 2
- 3

3.2 What is your school's RTA-funded teacher provided intervention for each grade level? If your grant does not include a grade level, please select, No Program for that grade. (Select only one intervention per grade level.)

Grade	RTA Teacher-Provided Intervention	'Other' Explanation	Number of Students Served	Program Effectiveness		
				Highly Effective	Effective	Not Effective
Intervention A						
K	Breakthrough to Literacy			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intervention B (Optional)						
K	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intervention C (Optional)						
K	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intervention D (Optional)						
K	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3.2.1 How many hours of training did the RTA Teacher receive to learn how to implement the intervention(s) you identified above for grades K, 1, 2, and 3? (Note this training could have been several years ago.)

	Less than 5 Hrs	5-10 Hrs.	11-20 Hrs.	More than 20 Hrs.
K Intervention	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.1 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.2 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.3 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comments on Initial Training	<input type="text"/>			

3.2.2 How many hours of training has the RTA teacher received this year to support implementation of the intervention(s) you identified above for grades K, 1, 2, and 3?

	NA for this grade	Less than 5 Hrs	5-10 Hrs.	11-20 Hrs.	More than 20 Hrs.
K Intervention	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.1 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.2 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gr.3 Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comments on Initial Training	<input type="text"/>				

3.3 How confident are you in your ability to improve student learning with the groups of students identified below?

Group	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective
With all students	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With minority students	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With students of both genders	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With students who qualify for free or reduced priced meals	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With students who qualify for English language learner services	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With students who qualify for special education services	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3.4 How do you rate the effectiveness of the selected intervention(s) used at your school in general?

Grade Level	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	No Program at this grade level
K	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If the effectiveness varies by program, please use this text box to explain:

3.5 If the intervention is effective, please explain why it is effective. (Check all that apply.)

- Meets multiple needs.
- Materials are interesting.
- There are good teacher supports.
- Program is easy to monitor progress.
- There is good training or professional development available.
- Other (please specify):

If the effectiveness varies by program, please use this text box to explain:

3.6 If the intervention is not effective, please explain why. (Check all that apply.)

- Meets few needs.
- Materials are lacking.
- Teacher support is lacking.
- There is not good training or professional development available.
- Program is difficult to use for progress monitoring
- Other (please specify):

If the effectiveness varies by program, please use this text box to explain:

Save

4.0 PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION - The expectation for schools with Read to Achieve grants is that they provide SHORT-TERM, INTENSIVE services for struggling readers with regular PROGRESS MONITORING.

4.1 Indicate the average period of time (in weeks) that most closely resembles the amount of time students receive the RTA-funded intervention instruction:

Grade	<10 weeks	10-15 weeks	15-20 weeks	20-25 weeks	25-30 weeks	>30 weeks
K	<input type="radio"/>					
1	<input type="radio"/>					
2	<input type="radio"/>					
3	<input type="radio"/>					

4.2 PROGRESS MONITORING - Identify ALL of the assessments your school uses to PROGRESS MONITOR students receiving RTA intervention services and indicate how often you administer the assessment.

PROGRESS MONITORING TOOLS (Formative)	How often is the student progress monitored using this assessment?
ss	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Every week <input type="radio"/> Biweekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> Every week <input type="radio"/> Biweekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> Every week <input type="radio"/> Biweekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> Every week <input type="radio"/> Biweekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> Every week <input type="radio"/> Biweekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>

5.0 What OTHER interventions are provided to eligible students that are NOT delivered by the RTA-funded teacher for each grade level?

Grade	RTA Teacher-Provided Intervention	'Other' Explanation	Number of Students Served	Program Effectiveness		
				Highly Effective	Effective	Not Effective
K	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	No program at this grade			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.0 Different Intervention

6.1 Given what you know at this point, if you had the opportunity to select and implement a different RTA-funded intervention strategy, would you choose a different intervention?

- Yes
- No (skip to question 6.1.4)

6.1.1 If yes, identify the grade level(s) for which you would choose a different intervention. (Check all that apply.)

- K
- 1
- 2
- 3

6.1.2 If yes, what are the concerns or issues with your current intervention? (Check all that apply.)

- Materials lacking.
- Teacher support lacking.
- Difficult to monitor student progress.
- Meets few needs.
- Other (please specify):

If concerns vary by program, explain here:

6.1.3 If yes, what program characteristics are you looking for in another intervention? (Check all that apply.)

- Different approach:
- More effective student materials.
- Better teacher materials.
- There is training or professional development available.
- Progress monitoring.
- Other (please specify):

**6.1.4 If no, what program characteristics are most important in your current intervention(s)?
(Check all that apply.)**

- Approach.
- Student materials.
- Teacher materials.
- There is training or professional development available.
- Progress monitoring.
- Other (please specify):

If important program characteristics vary by grade level, explain here:

7.0 RTA is intended to be part of a system of interventions in support of student reading improvement.

7.1 Please identify who is involved on the RTA team. (Check all that apply.)

- RTA-funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal or other administrator
- Counselor
- Special education teacher(s)
- Parent
- Other (please specify):

7.2 Please identify the RTA team's activities.. (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):

7.3 Please identify how often the RTA team meets

- Weekly
- Monthly
- 1-2 times/year
- Never
- Other

8.0 2011-2012 SCHOOL CLOSING/MERGING INFORMATION

8.1 Our school will be closing at the end of this school year, 2010-2011.

- Yes
- No

8.1.1 If yes, please explain.

8.2 Our school will be merging with another school at the end of this school year, 2010-2011.

- Yes
- No

8.2.1 If yes, please explain.

9.0 2011-2012 RTA STAFF INFORMATION

9.1 Will the RTA teacher change for the 2011-2012 school year?

- Yes
- No

9.1.1 If yes, and the new Intervention Teacher has been identified, list the new teacher's name:

Save

APPENDIX A-2

***ELECTRONIC SURVEY
REPORT III COMMENTS***

APPENDIX A-2 ELECTRONIC SURVEY REPORT III COMMENTS

Appendix A-2 presents comments from the “Other” responses to identified questions from the Electronic Survey Report III completed in May 2011 by all RTA teachers. The data are shown connected to the exhibits initially included and described in **Chapter 3**.

EXHIBIT A-2-1 CONCERN(S) OR ISSUE(S) WITH CURRENT INTERVENTION

Concern(s) / Issue(s)	Number	Percent
Materials lacking	32	50%
Teacher support lacking	16	25%
Difficult to monitor progress	25	39%
Meets few needs	27	42%
Other	32	50%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

“Other” included the following responses:

Does not meet overall reading needs, especially the older students.

Materials need to be more challenging and correspond with the skills being taught in the classroom.

No daily text to read; lacks school/home connections; weak in comprehension skills limited writing.

Reading Recovery is awesome and I like Reading Mastery for many children.

Some of the facts in the books are out of date or just plain wrong.

Reading passages need to be more extensive to increase comprehension.

Old, need for new and improved.

It's a model not a specific program like Reading Recovery.

Teachers are not on board with it.

The program does not work with all students.

Lacks the intensity and focus we desire for teaching mastery of the essential components of reading.

Serves only 4 students at a time.

Does not meet the needs of the non-reader.

Lacks systematic, explicit instruction.

No PD, I have to fill in gaps for phonics and comp.

Outdated and cannot order new supplies.

Not as effective for the lowest students.

Early Success doesn't allow for short term, intensive, then exit based progress monitor data.

Lacks structured phonics instruction.

Can only teach one student at a time.

I would like to review other materials to see if there could be an even better fit for our students.

Budget/Staffing Cuts.

Having been trained in CIM we would like to implement CIM in our small group model.

Curriculum uses contrived texts.

Insufficient phonics component.

Program is good but lessons are used before children are ready to exit.

Training.

Training, out of date.

Program does not go in depth enough.

LLI.

No use of books/reading in context; limited writing.

More explicit scope and sequence for phonics instruction.

**EXHIBIT A-2-2
DESIRED CHARACTERISTIC(S) FOR DIFFERENT INTERVENTION PROGRAM(S)**

Characteristic(s)	Number	Percent
Different approach	25	39%
More effective student materials	45	70%
Better teacher materials	33	51%
Training or professional development available	28	44%
Progress monitoring	32	50%
Other	16	25%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Different approach: The 25 schools that want a different approach included the following specific comments:

A program that encompasses phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension skills.

Would like to integrate all Reading components in my daily intervention practices.

Reading Recovery strategies adapted for small group.

Daily text to read and take home; school/home connection.

Kinesthetic- more hands on.

Hitting all 5 of the Reading Components more effectively.

Less phonetic emphasis.

Developmentally appropriate.

Maybe a intervention program instead of a model.

CIM.

Program that all teachers will buy into.

More like reading recovery strategies.

A research-based reading program that consistently and reliably meets individualized needs.

Specific learning targeted within text, not in isolation.

CIM Intervention.

With more writing.

Reading Recovery: individualized program to meet that students needs.

The CIM portfolio includes a collection of seven evidence-based interventions for K-middle school.

More phonics based.

Able to meet more specific needs instead of each child following the same format of the daily lesson.

More in depth material that focuses on fluency and comprehension.

Use of books; writing.

Higher levels for second and third grade students.

Reading Recovery strategies adapted for small group.

Decoding skills and application of them.

Other: The 16 schools that indicated Other described the following desirable program characteristics:

More appropriate for all primary levels. Incorporates different levels that students can progress through.

Align with core content/rigor.

Reader's Theater-Fluency

Ability to differentiate when I must pull out my students during one block of time.

A program that will allow small groups of students to receive help thus serving more students yearly.

Student monitoring progress; fluency bases.

An Intervention Program K-2 that is intensive enough to allow for exiting: data/PM.

Phonics.

Small Group.

For grades K-2, I would like a series to not only focus on the skills, but to have engaging stories.

Consistent lesson format, assessment schedule and embedded professional development.

Whole language materials.

High interest books--greater phonics support.

Additional levels.

Better literature.

Read Well by Sopris West/Marie Carbo.

EXHIBIT A-2-3 DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT PROGRAM(S)

Characteristic of Current Program(s)	Number	Percent
Approach	243	94%
Student materials	206	80%
Teacher materials	186	72%
Training or professional development	178	70%
Progress monitoring	218	82%
Other	30	11%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

“Other” included the following responses:

On-going assessments.

Reading Recovery and LLI explore all areas of reading, as well as writing development.

Monthly Reading Recovery and CIM Continuing Contact throughout the school year.

Guided Reading gives me the flexibility to provide differentiated instruction; movement in/out.

Success rate.

Teacher-leader support.

Meets individualized needs.

One to one instruction.

Teacher knowledge.

It allows students with attention and focusing difficulties distraction free instruction.

Ability to serve a wider range of students. i.e., CIM groups.

Leveled Literacy was implemented in the late Fall. This program was very effective.

Communication with teachers.

Our faculty working together to meet specific needs of each child.

Small group and 1on 1 that these students needs to increase skill to average level.

Collaboration with others in the county; communication with teachers.

Our RTA teacher is great at meeting the needs of our identified students.

Interest level.

1:1 and small group focuses on need of most at-risk students.

SRA consultant monitoring of teacher as well as student growth.

Individualized instruction.

Intentional and explicit to include all components of reading instruction.

Reading recovery and CIM both require/promote teacher's knowledge base to constantly progress.

Highly trained teacher.

Research based and effective.

Matches with our core reading curriculum.

Small group provides comfort level for success. Positive relationship with classroom teachers.

The addition of the CIM and LLI has allowed me to more effectively meet the needs of students.

The one-on-one lessons.

It is reliable and gives pertinent information to a child's ability and areas for growth.

**EXHIBIT A-2-4
SYSTEM OF SUPPORT
RTA TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

Role / Position	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
RTA-funded teacher(s)	321	99%
Principal or other administrator	314	97%
Data Coordinator	306	94%
Primary Classroom Teacher(s)	277	85%
Counselor	121	37%
Special Education Teacher(s)	154	47%
Parent	101	31%
Other	55	31%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Other: This data identifies the “Other” positions described by schools as involved on the RTA Team. Some positions were identified by several schools, but are only listed once. Positions included:

Other intervention Teachers.

RTI Teacher.

Curriculum Coach.

Other Interventionists.

Special education teachers.

Title One teachers and literacy assistants.

School's psychologist, EL teachers.

District psychologist.

School Psychologist, Speech, Title 1.

Curriculum Facilitator.

Other reading intervention teachers.

Speech Teacher.

RTI Coordinator.

Title I teacher, Student Achievement Consultant, School Psychologist.

Other Interventionists.

Speech teacher, family resource director.
 District Reading representative.
 Reading recovery teacher.
 Family Ties Liaison.
 FRC, ESL, Other reading specialists,
 academic coach.
 Writing Coach.
 Literacy Coach.
 RTI leader.
 Jennifer C. (for decision-making).
 ESL teacher.
 School psychologist, curriculum coach,
 sometimes school counselor.
 District Reading Coach.
 Supervisor of Curriculum.
 Asst. Principal, Dist. Elem. Supv. Sch.
 Psychologist.

RTI Support Teacher.
 RTI committee members.
 Reading instructional tutors and curriculum
 coach.
 Media specialist, family resource director,
 and speech pathologist.
 School Resource Coach.
 Reading instructional coach.
 Curriculum Coach.
 School psychologist.
 Informal meetings with individual teachers
 upon request.
 Assistants.
 Curriculum Facilitator.
 Literacy Lab Instructional Assistants.
 RTI Team- Response To Intervention Team
 input is vital to the success and tracking of
 how students grow.

**EXHIBIT A-2-5
 RTA TEAM ACTIVITIES**

Activity	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Develop and review student selection and exit criteria	293	90%
Review individual student progress	316	97%
Analyze student data	315	96%
Plan professional development	136	42%
Support parent involvement	197	60%
Other	18	5%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

Other: The schools that identified “Other,” described the following activities:

Small group placement.
 RR and CIM teachers.
 Attend professional developments.
 Working on an RTI plan for the school.
 Share student data/progress with staff.
 Meet and conference with classroom
 teachers, help develop strategies for the
 classroom.
 Attended professional development.

Home visits are made if necessary.
 Next steps for child.
 Help foster student success in reading.
 Organize and distribute GRADE
 schedules/booklets/scoring.
 On-going review of progress monitoring
 data.
 Train for assessment administration.
 Look at next steps for child.

Flexible grouping, co-teaching.

Support Individual Staff Growth.

Plan school-wide literacy training, support and literacy events.

Support Core instruction with feedback to student needs and strengths.

**EXHIBIT A-2-6
RTA TEAM MEETINGS**

Meetings	Number	Percent
Weekly	47	14%
Monthly	133	41%
1-2 times per year	47	14%
Never	3	0.9%
Other	91	28%

Source: RTA Report III. May 2011.

"Other" included the following responses:

Initially at the beginning of the school year. RTA Teacher/Data Coordinator meets with team members.

4 times a year.

Every six weeks.

4 times per year.

6-8 weeks.

As needed.

As needed.

Beginning of the year ---monthly end of the year less.

As often as needed based on student progress.

Monthly or as needed.

As needed but at least every 6 weeks.

Staff will meet weekly and parents will be contacted by the team as necessary.

as needed, but at least twice.

It varies, according to need. Classroom teachers and RTA teacher meet together frequently.

Twice a month.

As needed.

Often, PLC's team meetings.

Quarterly.

Twice a month.

Every 7 weeks.

ALL intervention teachers meet with the grade levels during team meetings.

We met regularly via data team, PLC's and with PERKS review a new team is being formed.

3 times/year.

2 times/month.

Quarterly.

As needed.

The RTA teacher and the classroom teachers meet weekly, at PLC meetings; other members as needed.

Minimum of quarterly when formative data analysis occurs, more often if needed.

We meet weekly at the beginning of the year, and usually every three weeks or so thereafter.

5 times/year.

As needed to monitor progress.

Monthly but as needed.

Quarterly.

We meet when needs arise and it is necessary to make important decisions for students and program.

Every 2 weeks.

Grade level meetings once per week.

Bi-weekly.

Weekly per grade level.

We met 2 times this year as a whole team. However, we plan to meet more often next year.

Daily with teachers, two-three months with the whole team.

As often as necessary.

Bi-monthly.

We have informal meetings as needed.

3 times/year.

Primary teachers- I meet weekly.

I meet with classroom teachers daily and with administration monthly and other as needed.

As often as necessary.

At benchmark times and when needed.

RTA Intervention Teacher and Primary Classroom Teachers meet weekly/ Whole team meets 1-2 per year.

3 times per year.

Bi-weekly.

At least twice, more if needed.

No set amount of times. Just as needed. (Maybe 6 times a year).

Twice a month.

As needed.

5-6 times a year or as needed.

Quarterly.

As needed.

Do not meet as a whole team, but collaborate and conference with other members of the team.

At PLC Meetings - 2 weeks.

Meets quarterly.

Three times/year.

Fall, Winter, Spring.

As needed.

3-4 times/year.

Every 6 weeks.

As needed.

Along with RTI every 6 weeks.

Monthly; but also when a student is ready to be exited from a program.

Every 2 weeks.

Daily/weekly with teachers and principal, every two-three months with parent and counselor attending.

Regular Basis.

Bi-weekly.

Quarterly as a whole, but RTA teacher and primary teachers meet weekly.

Varies -2 days at beginning of year - bi-monthly throughout year (sometimes more-as needed).

We have met 3 times this year (Fall, Mid-Year, and End of Year).

At the end of each 9 weeks or more often if needed; after all benchmark assessments.

Meet informally with teachers based on student needs. Provide additional assess upon request.

4 times per year as a group. I meet with the data coordinator at least once a month.

On-going and as needed.

Email is used daily or as needed.

As needed.

The entire team meets monthly and the Intervention Teacher, Coordinator and Instr. Assts. meet wkly.

We meet after each DEA Assessment and as often as needed to discuss individual progress of students.

3-4 times a year or as needed.

Beginning of year and as needed.

Each grading period.

2 times per month.

Least monthly, but some more often.

6 week intervals will move to 2X's a month for the 2011-2012 school year.

4 times per year.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

MGT created protocols for the RTA principal and teacher telephone interviews. The protocols were used in April 2011 to gather data for the Program Study, as described in **Chapter 3**.

KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW GUIDE 2010-2011

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

- 1a. Describe the overall program of support for struggling readers at your school.
- 1b. How does RTA fit into the school-wide program of support?
- 2a. Is there a team approach to supporting struggling readers? Other than RTA, what people and/or program(s) are used to support struggling readers?
- 2b. Describe the membership of the RTA Team.
- 2c. What are their roles on the RTA team or the larger structure of support for struggling readers?
- 2d. 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?
- 2e. How effective do you think the RTA team is in identifying and supporting struggling readers? What evidence do you have? What would make it more effective?
- 2f. If you or the RTA teacher left at the end of this year, would the work of the RTA team continue? How important is the work of the RTA team for the school and the students?

STUDENT SELECTION

3a. What is the process for selecting struggling students for RTA support? Are there specific selection criteria? (If there is a written description, can we get copy?)

3b. What is the process for exiting students from RTA? Are there specific criteria? (If written, can we get a copy?)

3c. 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?

STUDENT IMPACT

4a. In your opinion, what is the overall impact of the RTA program on student achievement?

4b. 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
- Migrant students

4c. How effective is your school-selected intervention with different groups – minorities, F/R, special education, ELL, etc.?

4d. What would increase your effectiveness in closing or eliminating the achievement gap?

MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS TEST

5a. How are you using the MAP test?

5b. How is the MAP test useful to you and your staff? To the district? Could it be useful for the state?

5c. How is the MAP test useful to students and families?

5d. What are you using to assess students in grades K and 1? Selection? Progress? Exiting?

OTHER

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

THANK YOU. If you have questions, please contact me at 360-920-9959 or
szoller@mgtamer.com

**KENTUCKY READ TO ACHIEVE RTA Teacher INTERVIEW GUIDE
2010-2011**

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 overall program of support for struggling readers at your school.
 - 1a. How does RTA fit into the school-wide program of support?
 - 2a. Are you part of a team approach to supporting struggling readers? Other than RTA, what people and/or program(s) are used to support struggling readers?
 - 2b. Describe the membership of the RTA Team.
 - 2c. What are their roles on the RTA team or the larger structure of support for struggling readers?
 - 2d. 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?
 - 2e. How effective do you think the RTA team is in identifying and supporting struggling readers? What evidence do you have? What would make it more effective?
 - 2f. If you or your principal left at the end of this year, would the work of the RTA team continue? How important is RTA to the students and the school?

STUDENT SELECTION

- 3a. What is the process for selecting struggling students for RTA support? Are there specific selection criteria? (If the process is written, can we get a copy?)
- 3b. What is the process for exiting students from RTA? Are there specific criteria? (If the process is written, can we get a copy?)

- 3c. 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?

STUDENT IMPACT

- 4a. In your opinion, what is the overall impact of the RTA program on student achievement?
- 4b. 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
 - Migrant students
- 4c. How confident are you of your effectiveness with various groups of students – minorities, F/R, special education, ELL, etc.?
- 4d. What would increase your sense of confidence?
- 4e. How effective is your school-selected intervention with different groups – minorities, F/R, special education, ELL, etc.?
- 4d. What would increase the effectiveness of the RTA program in closing or eliminating the achievement gap?

MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS TEST

- 5a. How are you using the MAP test?
- 5b. How is the MAP test useful to the RTA Team? To the district? Could it be useful for the state?
- 5c. How is the MAP test useful to students and families?
- 5d. What are you using to assess students in grades K and 1? Selection? Progress? Exiting?

OTHER

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

Thank you. For more information, I can be reached at 360-920-9959 or szoller@mgtamer.com

APPENDIX C

***MEASURES OF ACADEMIC
PROGRESS REPORT***

APPENDIX C MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORT

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is a product of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), a “non-profit organization working alongside member school districts to create a culture that values and uses data to improve instruction and student learning.”¹ The MAP test is widely used across the country to assess student performance in grades K-12 in several subject areas, including reading and mathematics.

The MAP test taken by students in the RTA schools is aligned with the Kentucky curriculum standards. The alignment was reported in a document titled, **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Kentucky State-Aligned Version 4.**²

In Kentucky, there are at least 140 RTA schools using the MAP to monitor student progress. MGT interviewed staff at 30 schools and visited six schools to gather information about their use of the MAP assessment data. A description of the student achievement data gathered from the six site visit schools is located in **Chapter 4.**

The telephone interview protocols used with RTA teachers and principals (described in **Appendix B**) included the following questions about the MAP assessment at their school:

- How are you using the MAP test?
- How is the MAP test useful to the RTA team? To the district? Could it be useful to the state?
- How is the MAP test useful to students and families?

For each question, MGT has provided information gathered from the interviews.

C.1 How Are You Using the MAP Test?

The responses from principals to this question included the following:

- Six schools reported that this was their first year using MAP and were still learning how to use it. Six schools reported that they had been using MAP for more than 5 years.
- Scores are used to identify students who need support or intervention.
- Scores are used for goal setting – both for individual students and for teachers to move their entire class forward.
- Scores are used to show progress and growth.

¹ www.nwea.org

² Ibid

- Data are used to plan professional development for staff – areas that appear to need school-wide or grade level emphasis.
- Comments:
 - “I am very excited. The MAP gives good results and has classroom resources to support teachers (DesCartes materials and Compass Learning).”
 - “This has been a ‘bandwagon district,’ but has settled on the MAP for the next few years.”
 - “The students know their goals and celebrate their progress.”
 - “I’m not sure of the accuracy of the test at kindergarten, but the teachers are getting more comfortable.”
 - “We need training this summer to understand the ‘So,... what?’ of this test. Now that we know the score, ‘So, what do we do next?’ “
 - “We are finally getting more proficient with the RIT ranges.”
 - “This is a great way to identify students that are low achievers and to measure progress.”
 - “We use DesCartes to understand the ‘Swiss cheese’ – what do children really know and understand and what they need.”
 - “It is a real wake up call to teachers when they see their class scores.”
 - “The MAP gives us a common language and set of norms as targets.”
 - “All teachers are held accountable. They can’t hide anymore; they need to show a year’s growth.”
 - “I don’t know what I would do without it.”

The responses from the RTA teachers regarding how they use the MAP assessment included the following:

- The MAP data helps identify students in need of intervention. Many RTA teachers mentioned using the spring data to create initial groups for the fall.
- Some RTA teachers reported that the classroom teachers made more use of the details of the MAP data than the RTA teacher.
- RTA teachers reported using the MAP as an indicator or starting point and finding it helpful.

- Comments:
 - “The T-pro was more user-friendly. Stanines are easier to understand than RIT scores.”
 - “I use the score to rank students for selection into my intervention groups.”
 - “It’s great to get instant results, rather than having to wait, like we have to for KCCT scores.”
 - “We look at student RIT scores and their percentile to see the gains made and see if they met their expected growth.”
 - “I get the MAP scores from teachers, but mostly for my groups where I focus on skills needed. For the Reading Recovery kids, I focus on the whole student.”
 - “The MAP has been an excellent test. I am still learning how to read the reports and convert from Stanines.”

In all the schools interviewed and visited, the MAP test data appears to be used across the school, by classroom teachers, RTA teachers, and the principal. It appears to provide important information that is used for both formative and summative decision-making. More importantly, for many of the respondents, it is helpful to students and families.

C.2 How is the MAP Test Useful to the RTA Team? To the District? Could It Be Useful to the State?

The responses to this question often focused on how the district and state could use the data. Some principals who indicated that they were funding the MAP assessments from their building budget were excited to think about it being a state-funded assessment. Other principals already had district-wide implementation and funding of the MAP, but were excited about a state-wide application. Some principals indicated that it would be an especially useful tool, given the amount of student transience they experience. These principals indicated that having good data about students when they arrived was very important in getting kids started well in their new setting.

There were no responses indicating a lack of usefulness to the district or the state. One comment captured the essence of the test:

It would be useful for the whole state. It assesses the skills we care about. It is on computer and you get the results instantly. It is focused on the child – giving each of them the questions that are appropriate for them.

C.3 How is the MAP Test Useful to Students and Families?

This question generated many positive responses from both RTA teachers and principals. Both groups cited the benefit of having RIT score targets, although both groups also indicated that it took some effort to make sure students and parents understood RIT scores well enough to make sense of the goals. Many said that RIT scores were easier than percentile ranks for parents to understand, since they are continuous from kindergarten to grade 12. Many also indicated that the instantaneous data information was such a positive for students. *“They went in (to the computer lab to take the test) with their goal cards and came out with a, ‘Yippee.’ when they were successful at meeting their target.”*

There were also comments about the benefits of the web-based interventions or tutorials provided through Compass Learning. Not all of the schools subscribe to this service, but those that did felt that this was another opportunity for school-home connection because students could access their instructional support activities from any location – home, public library, etc.

- Comments included:
 - “We conference with families in the fall and share the data. It’s easier to understand than other tests.”
 - “For students, this is part of goal-setting. It has tremendous impact on how students approach the test; increased motivation to work hard.”
 - “Students really take ownership of their learning.”
 - “(The RIT score) is not as useful as a graphic display would be. We are working to show the national norms on a graph so parents could see progress.”
 - “Families like to know where students are compared to other students, but they need help to understand the RIT data.
 - “Parents are now asking for data and that challenges teachers to meet their needs.”

The MAP assessment had broad support in the RTA schools from the staff that were interviewed. The principals and teachers agreed that it provided important and timely information that was helpful to all stakeholders and would be a useful tool to have for individual children and their families, as well as for the districts and the state as a whole,