Hickman County School System

Response to Intervention (RTI) Plan
Introduction:

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an assessment and intervention process for monitoring student progress and identifying students that are at risk for academic failure. The goal of RTI is to improve reading levels of struggling students. It addresses the prevention of reading difficulties using a series of effective classroom practices, progress monitoring, tiered instruction, and assessment. Our school district, in compliance with No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, commits to developing a response to intervention plan that best serves our students, as well as, provide equal educational opportunities for students as required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

The Hickman County School System has adopted the Response to Intervention Framework and has created a model that will best serve our students by using intensive levels of intervention, monitoring, and tracking progress at frequent intervals with required communication from/to parents. The inception of our plan focuses on kindergarten through fifth grade students. Successful implementation of our plan will depend largely upon strong leadership, appropriate classroom instruction, and continual parent communication. Our team has navigated through the progress with assistance from the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, the Iris Center, and the Reading First Program.

Mission Statement:

The Response to Intervention Program is committed in reaching all students who require additional interventions to reach their highest level of literacy possible in a timely and efficient manner.

Overview:

The Response to Intervention Plan is an intervention and assessment process for monitoring student progress and identifying students who are at risk for academic failure or behavioral difficulties. The Hickman County School System elected to begin implementation in the subject of Reading/Language Arts in grades kindergarten through second grade and has continued implementation in Reading/Language Arts through fifth grade. The system will use a four tier
model for its RTI Plan, with three tiers of intervention and the fourth tier being a special education referral.

A study team comprised of Central Office personnel met in October 2008. This core team established goals as preparation was made for self-assessment of both Centerville Elementary School and East Hickman Elementary School. Suggestions from the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, were followed.

Hickman County currently has two elementary schools that serve grades K-2 and two intermediate schools that serve grades 3-5. Each elementary school has teachers employed as Title 1 Reading Teachers. They are a vital part of the reading program in their respective schools. Each elementary school currently has five Title I Teachers serving the needs of the students. In addition, an RTI Coordinator was hired during the 2008-2009 school year to conduct teacher training twice a month at each school and assess the system’s readiness to implement RTI. The following training was conducted at both the elementary and intermediate level:

1. Examining the research-based core reading program *Scott Foresman Reading Series* and the five essential components of reading:
   - phonics awareness
   - phonics
   - fluency
   - vocabulary
   - comprehension

2. Applying intervention documentation to classroom instruction

3. Reviewing small group instruction

4. Becoming familiar with the multi-tiers of RTI and the requirements of each

5. Classroom Management

6. Differentiated Instruction

7. Progress Monitoring

RTI Committees have been created at each of the elementary schools. Each committee includes teachers, the school psychologist, the RTI coordinator, and administrators to meet and assist teachers with instructional strategies and make decisions regarding student progress. These steps were taken to reassure teachers how to fully implement the State Department of
Education requirements before referring a student for special education services through the RTI model.

Hopefully, the components of RTI have been addressed: high-quality and researched-based teaching of activities, strategies, and interventions; documentation of interventions; and student tracking and progress monitoring as the system moves toward inception of RTI.
District Level/Hickman County School System

RTI Team

Wanda Berry…………………………..……Director of Federal Programs
Jean Gregory…………………………..……Director of Special Programs
Michelle Gilbert…………………………..….Curriculum Director
Alicia Lankford…………………………..….School Psychologist
Angie Manor ………………………………S-Team Coordinator
Belinda Potts…………………………………RTI Coordinator

Centerville Elementary School

RTI Team

Michelle Atkinson…………………………..….First Grade Teacher
Jennifer Hudgins………………………….….Second Grade Teacher
Cindy Johnston……………………………..……….Kindergarten Teacher
Misty Shelton……………………………………………………………..Principal

East Hickman Elementary School

RTI Team

Mandy Carter………………………………….Second Grade Teacher
Melissa Kennedy…………………………….Kindergarten Teacher
Joni Prince………………………………………………….Principal
Teresa Totty…………………………………………….First Grade Teacher
Centerville Intermediate School

RTI Team

Susan Prince..............................................Third Grade Teacher
Andrea Spears..........................................Fourth Grade Teacher
Stephanie Ragsdale.................................Fifth Grade Teacher
Mary Jane Chapman..............................At-Risk Reading Teacher
Alicia Baker...........................................Principal

East Hickman Intermediate School

RTI Team

Peggy McClellan.................................Third Grade Teacher
..............................................Fourth Grade Teacher
..............................................Fifth Grade Teacher
Kathy Dick...........................................Principal

The RTI Coordinator and the School Psychologist will serve on each school’s RTI Committee. Other specialists will serve as needed.
PART A. General Procedures

1. Academic area: Reading

2. Describe staff resources configuration: Grade level collaboration, RTI School Committee, District Level RTI Committee, RTI Coordinator, School Administrators during Professional Development days, planning times, after school meetings

3. Describe your universal screening procedures: Three times per year

   Kindergarten- Summer screenings before entering kindergarten using *GRADE* Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)

   First and Second Grade- *GRADE* assessment when school begins

   Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades—STAR Literacy Assessment

   All students at mid-term- *STAR* Early Literacy Test

   Early spring- K-2 *GRADE* assessment, and all grades *STAR* Early Literacy Test

4. Number of tiers to be used: 4 tier intervention model with three tiers of interventions and the fourth tier being a special education referral

5. How often are grade-level teams going to meet? Weekly during planning times and scheduled professional development days

6. What is the procedure for students who enter school mid-term? All students, including new students, will be screened using *GRADE assessment, STAR* Early Literacy Test, and current placement test from Scott Foresman *Reading Street* Series mid year.

7. When will school staff contact parents? Beginning of year, after each universal screen, between tiers, and at regular intervals of tiered intervention
RTI General Procedures-Summary

The Central Office Committee for RTI feels confident that the system is ready for implementation of the Response to Intervention Program. A readiness assessment has been conducted and recommendations have been met.

Before entering Kindergarten, every student will be screened during the summer months. The RTI Coordinator will initiate the screenings with the use of the Grade Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) Test from Pearson. First and second grade students will also be given the GRADE assessment when school begins. All students in grades K-5 will also be given the Placement Test from Scott Foresman Reading Street Series and a STAR Early Literacy Test. The GRADE test will be given to K-2 students twice more throughout the school year to determine and allow the RTI Committee in each respective school to evaluate individual student progress.

Grade-level teams are given opportunities to meet during coinciding planning times as needed throughout the school year during scheduled professional development days. Teachers record minutes of these meetings, and they are kept on file with the school administrator.

Students entering mid-term will be given the Placement Test from the Scott Foresman Reading Street Series and a STAR Early Literacy Test, and their records will be evaluated by their classroom teacher. If the teacher is concerned based on classroom performance and the previously mentioned evaluations, those students would be referred to the RTI Committee for further review.

All parents are invited to school to meet with teachers/faculty members at the beginning of the school year. The school handbook and RTI Plan will be reviewed with them at that time. Parents are invited to two parent-teacher conferences throughout the school year. When a student is referred to the RTI Committee, parents will be notified by letter of the concerns of the teacher/committee and the interventions that will occur. Parents will be updated on progress through graded work that will be sent home regularly. If a student should need to move to Tier 3, the parents will be invited to join the RTI Committee for discussion and input. The parents will receive updates throughout the Tier 3 interventions. If adequate progress is not made, parents would then be involved in the initial special education referral meeting.
PART B. Tier 1

1. and 2. Describe core reading by grade: Students in Hickman County receive instruction through the Scott-Foresman *Reading Street* Series. The students receive large and small group instruction. The teachers implement the differentiated levels of instruction in the classroom setting. The reading/language arts instruction includes 90 minutes per day through direct instruction, small groups, learning centers, circle time, journals, and handwriting. Teachers use assisted reading techniques as additional strategies to help readers. Struggling students also receive tutoring from other school employees including educational assistants and enrichment teachers. High achievers also receive additional tutor time.

3. Describe staff training and staff development for core curriculum. Trainings on teaching the core curriculum were taught by the RTI Coordinator, Scott Foresman representatives, and Appelbaum Training Institute.

4. Describe types of instructional practices for reading. Small group, whole group instruction, literacy centers, assisted reading techniques, peer and school staff tutoring, computer-based review games, cooperative learning, the use of thinking maps and graphic organizers, and instruction involving tactile and kinesthetic methods.

5. Progress-monitoring procedures include: Benchmark tests, fluency and comprehension assessments from the Scott Foresman *Reading Street* series; progress monitored every six-weeks; RTI school committees meet before students move to Tier 2; communication with parents weekly; students who score in bottom 10% on universal screening and reading series assessments will move to Tier 2.

6. Data-based decision making procedures for Tier 1: Classroom teachers monitor data for their students. The RTI Committee will review data and notify parents if students must move to Tier 2 for additional intervention. A data-track document will be used system-wide to record progress.

7. Describe procedures to monitor fidelity of implementation for Tier 1. The RTI Coordinator and School Administrator will determine teacher fidelity through the use of the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Walk-through Evaluations. The system’s Instructional Supervisor will also monitor and analyze teacher fidelity data. Only Highly Qualified teachers will be hired in the school system.
Response to Intervention

Tier 1- Summary

Students in Hickman County receive reading instruction through the Scott-Foresman Reading Street series. They receive large group instruction and small group instruction through this program. The teachers implement the differentiated levels of instruction in the classroom setting. Teachers provide reading/language arts instruction at least 90 minutes per day through direct instruction, small groups, literacy centers, circle time, journals, and handwriting. Teachers use choral reading and partner reading as well as other assisted reading techniques. A variety of methods is used for differentiated instruction to reach all levels and types of learners. Students that struggle are also given time to work with other adults in the school building. Educational assistants and enrichment teachers are used to tutor and work with students that struggle. An on-site tutor also works with high achievers.

The RTI Coordinator continues to train teachers twice each month in small group settings at each elementary school. Representatives from Scott Foresman came to Hickman County to train our teachers on the proper implementation of the Reading Street series. Paraprofessionals/assistants were also trained in their role in student learning by Appelbaum Training Institute this school year (2008-2009). All training is correlated to our schools and district improvement plans.

All students will be monitored using the Benchmark tests in the Scott Foresman Reading Street series. They will also be tested on Fluency and Comprehension using the assessments from the reading series. The reading series assessments will be given by the classroom teacher. Progress will be monitored for six weeks, and parents will be notified of progress by sending home graded work, report cards, and contact from the school staff as needed. Students scoring in the bottom 10% based on the Screening and the reading series assessments will be referred to the RTI Committee for further review.

The classroom teacher will monitor each child’s progress. A student exhibiting a lack of continual progress based on the assessments given will be referred to the RTI Committee. The parents of the students referred to the committee will be notified by letter of the school’s concerns. The RTI Committee will review the students’ performance evaluations and determine who needs to move to Tier 2 and who needs to remain in Tier 1 with other interventions.
The school system will address this issue through the hiring process. A candidate for employment will only be hired if they possess the correct licensure from the State of Tennessee. All teaching candidates must be Highly Qualified. In addition, The RTI Coordinator and School Administrator will determine teacher fidelity through the use of the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Walk-through Evaluations. The RTI Coordinator, School Principal, and Instructional Supervisor will monitor and analyze data to determine student growth or lack thereof. Teachers that demonstrate a lack of instructional growth based on student results will be evaluated, and a future growth plan will be implemented.
Part C. Tier 2

1. Describe Tier 2 interventions to be used by grade “for each academic area being implemented: Classroom teachers will provide an additional 30 minutes of instruction to a small group or one-on-one setting. Tutoring from other staff within the building including educational assistants and licensed enrichment teachers will occur.

2. Length of intervention sessions: In addition to the 90 minutes of instruction from Tier 1, students will receive an additional 30 minutes three times per week in a small group setting.

3. Number of sessions per week and maximum number of students per group: Three 30 minutes sessions weekly with no more than five students in a group.

4. Who provides intervention(s) for reading? Classroom teachers

5. Describe staff development and training for Tier 2 providers. All teachers and staff are trained twice each month by the RTI Coordinator. Teachers received training from representatives of the Scott Foresman Reading Series in January 2009.

6. Progress-monitoring procedures: Students in Tier 2 will be assessed using the Scott Foresman Reading Series, STAR Early Literacy, Accelerated Reader, and teacher input and observations. Classroom teachers will administer progress monitoring every six weeks, and the results will be assessed by the RTI Committee in making recommendations for the students. Progress is monitored by using the Strategic Intervention Lesson Plans/Assessments and recorded on the Data Track document.

7. Data-based decision making procedures for Tier 2: Student progress is based on using the Strategic Intervention Lesson Plans/Assessments and recorded on the Data Track document. The RTI Committee, including student’s parents will be involved.

8. Describe procedures to be used to monitor the fidelity of implementation for Tier 2 intervention: Evaluations of the implementation of the reading series through the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Walk-through Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the classroom teachers will be assessed. The results of progress monitoring and benchmark testing will be reviewed.
Response to Intervention

Tier 2- Summary

Students in Tier 2 will receive intervention based on the Scott Foresman *Reading Street* series in grades K-2. In addition to the reading instruction given to the group, students in Tier 2 will receive an additional 30 minutes of instruction in a small group setting or one-on-one. Student progress will be monitored at least every two weeks and documented in triplicate form on the student data track form. Copies of the student progress will be sent to the RTI Committee and the Principal of the school. Small group intervention must meet at least three times per week with no more than four students per group. The classroom teacher provides this extra time of intervention. In addition, students in Tier 2 will receive additional assistance and tutoring from other adult employees within the school including educational assistants and licensed enrichment teachers.

All teachers and staff are trained twice each month on the *Scott Foresman Reading Street* Series and other classroom interventions as mentioned above. Students in Tier 2 will be progress monitored for six weeks using the assessments included in the Scott Foresman Reading Series, STAR Early Literacy and STAR Reading, Accelerated Reader, and teacher observations. The classroom teacher will conduct all progress monitoring. Students that do not make adequate gains will be further evaluated by the RTI Committee, and the committee will decide upon the correct action for the student in question. Parents will be involved in the committee meetings to determine if the student remains in Tier 2, returns to Tier 1, or progresses to Tier 3. The RTI Coordinator and school administrator will evaluate the implementation of the reading series through the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Walk-through Evaluations. The results of progress monitoring and benchmark testing will help evaluators determine the effectiveness of the classroom teachers and the fidelity of the program.
D. Tier 3

1. At what point is referral for consideration of special education services made? When the RTI Committee deems it necessary when a student is not progressing in Tier 3.

2. Describe the Tier 3 intervention program for reading: Tier 3 serves as the final tier of regular education before a special education referral is made. The RTI Coordinator and a representative from the special education department in the system will provide the interventions taken from *My Sidewalks*, an intervention program that correlates with the *Reading Street series*.

3. Length of intervention session and maximum number of students per group: Tier 3 students will receive an additional 30 minutes daily in small group settings with no more than four students per group.

4. Number of sessions per week: Five

5. Who provides interventions: RTI Coordinator (regular ed.,) and representative from the special education department (special ed.)

6. How are Tier 3 providers trained and describe staff development: The providers have years of teaching experience, and they have attended various workshops and webinars. Training and professional development are continued throughout the year.

7. Progress-monitoring procedures: Assessed by Scott Foresman intervention series and DIBELS. Student progress is recorded on the Data Track document.

8. Data-based decision making procedures: Data are secured through the reading series assessments and DIBELS with teacher input.
9. How are parents involved and kept informed at this level? Parents are contacted when their child moves into Tier 3, when scheduled RTI Committee meetings occur, and when sending assessments home.

10. How is fidelity of implementation monitored at Tier 3? Fidelity is monitored by the school administrator and the district level Instructional Supervisor. The special education team will also monitor fidelity as referrals are made to the special education program.
Response to Intervention

Tier 3- Summary

Students that progress to Tier 3 will receive an additional 30 minute session every day. The interventions in Tier 3 will be provided by the RTI Coordinator and a representative from the school system special education department. This tier would serve as the final tier of regular education before a special education referral is made. Interventions in this tier would come from *My Sidewalks*, an intervention program from Scott Foresman that correlates with the *Reading Street* series. The interventions would be implemented for a period of six weeks with a maximum number of four students per group. Professionals implementing Tier 3 interventions received training from various workshops, webinars, and years of teaching experience. Training and professional development are continual throughout the year as it becomes available. Students are assessed using the assessments from the Scott Foresman intervention series and DIBELS, and progress is monitored and documented on the Data Track document that was initiated in Tier 2. Parents are consulted during the RTI Committee meetings and are notified of progress by sending the assessments home. Fidelity is monitored by the school administrator and the district level Instructional Supervisor through evaluations. The special education team will also monitor fidelity in the event a referral is made to special education.
Response to Intervention

Tier 4 (Special Education Procedures)

If a student does make adequate progress as determined by the RTI Committee and the school psychologist, a referral for special education services and testing will be made. The RTI Committee, including parents and the school psychologist, will determine if a special education referral is appropriate. Consultations with the grade level teams occur throughout the RTI Tier process.

Response to Intervention is a new process in Hickman County. Throughout the 2008-2009 school year, the RTI Coordinator has spent time preparing and training our teachers for the implementation of the RTI program. We will continually be evaluating our program to answer the following questions:

1) Is the plan correctly identifying students?
2) Are the interventions appropriate?
3) Do the interventions need to be modified?
4) Are the assessment tools meeting needed requirements?
5) What changes need to be made to the plan?

Each time the RTI Committee meets, minutes from the meeting will be recorded and submitted to the RTI Coordinator. At the end of each meeting, a discussion will be held among the members to determine if changes need to be made. The minutes will reflect suggestions from the Committees. The District Level RTI Committee will meet twice per year to read the minutes and reflect on needed changes. A teacher survey, student retention rate, and student referral data will be reviewed to determine the effectiveness of the program each year.