


MEMORANDUM

TO: Title III Directors
Special Education Administrators

FROM: Amelia Courts, Executive Director
International Schools


Lynn Boyer, Executive Director
Office of Special Programs, Extended and Early Learning

DATE: August 13, 2008

RE: English Language Learners (ELLs) and Response to Intervention (RTI)

Due to the disparity in the number of ELLs in West Virginia districts across the state and because services for those students vary widely from school to school, it is impossible to prescribe a specific practice regarding ELLs and RTI. Instead, the following general guidelines should be considered in determining RTI for ELLs:

- The curriculum for ELLs should be the Tier 1 core curriculum, and Tier 1 services should include all appropriate accommodations and modifications.
- Direct ESL services by an ESL teacher should be considered as a Tier 2 intervention.
- When determining the needs of ELL students, it is imperative to examine individual ELLs' "true peers"
 - ELL students with similar cultural backgrounds
 - ELL students who have been learning English for similar amounts of time
 - ELL students who have similar levels of formal education in their native languages
 - ELL students who receive similar ESL services
- Consider the efficacy and impact on the student when scheduling several interventions during the school day from different education professionals, especially if culture shock and the silent period are in evidence with ELL students recently enrolled in US schools.
- Always use multiple measures in determining the need for any additional services for ELLs.
- Always involve ESL professionals (either the ESL teacher or the district Title III director) in decisions involving RTI Tier 2 or 3 services for ELLs.

Enclosed, for your reference, please find a document that provides further explanation and guidelines for RTI considerations for ELLs: *A Cultural, Linguistic, and Ecological Framework for Response to Intervention with English Language Learners*. Please feel free to contact Amelia Courts at (aadavis@access.k12.wv.us or 304-558-2691) or Linda Palenchar (lpalench@access.k12.wv.us or 304-558-2696) with further questions. Thank you.

cc: Dr. Jorea Marple
Linda Palenchar