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Special Educator Perspectives on Implementation of RTI/MTSS in Maine

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Overview

- Study purpose and method
- Findings
 - Implementation integrity
 - Resource needs
 - Challenges
 - Positive effects
- What's next?



Study Purpose

- Maine requires tiered support services
- Task Force on Special Education Cost Drivers in place
- How well are schools implementing RTI programs?



Method

- Survey items drafted and reviewed by content experts
- MDOE provided emails for:
 - Special educators
 - Special education directors
 - School psychologists
 - Behavior specialists
 - Literacy/math specialists
 - Coaches
- 571 responses (22%)



Findings Overview

- MTSS/RTI is not all one thing
- Academics and behavior are related but separate
- Differences in who “owns” RTI/MTSS
- Staffing
 - Expertise
 - Availability
 - Teaming
- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring



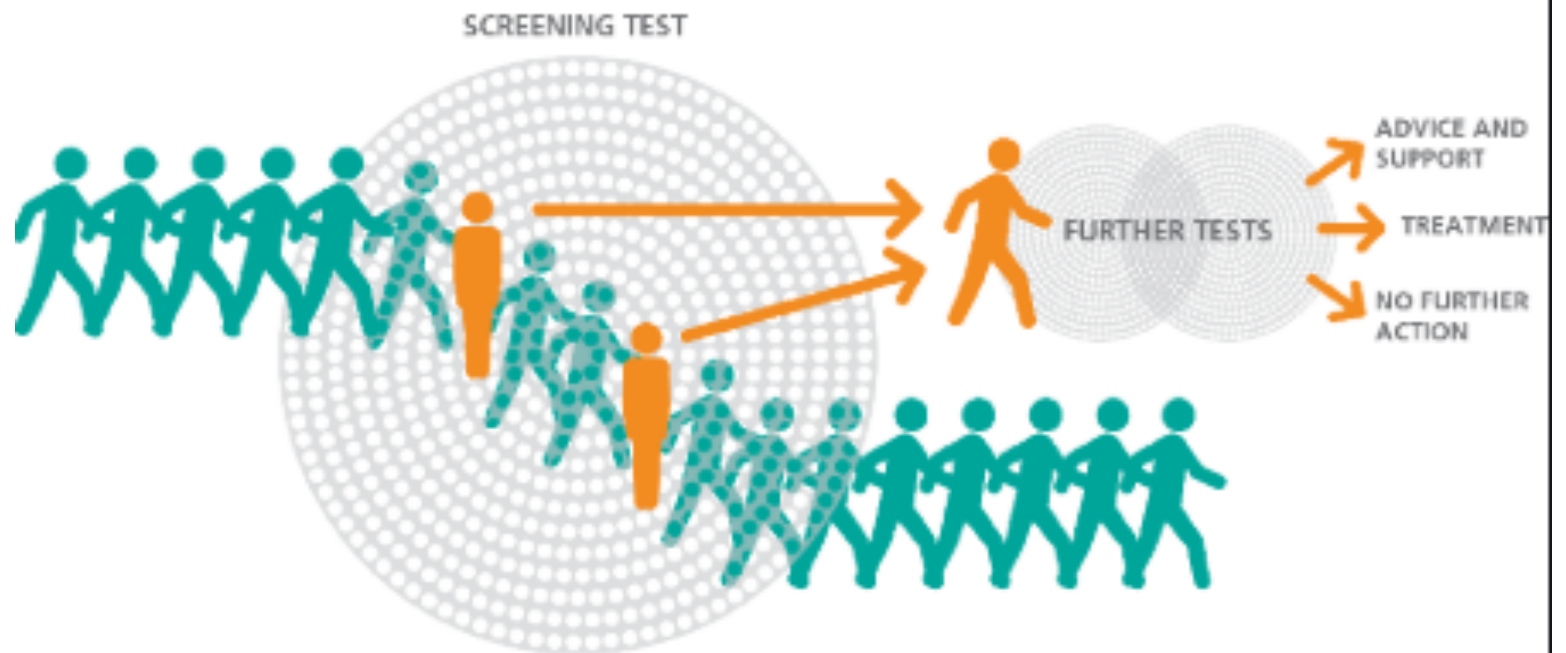
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Academic Supports



Academic Staffing

- 1 out of 7
 - RTI programs for academics are the responsibility of special education staff.
- 58%
 - Schools have adequate expertise to administer RTI for academics.
- 67%
 - Using a team approach for intervention decisions
- 41%
 - Monitoring the integrity of RTI services





Academic Screening

- 83%
 - Using a universal screening assessment to identify students who need academic support.
 - Elementary schools: 92%
 - Middle schools 85%
 - High schools 59%
- Demographics
 - Reported universal screening practices did not vary significantly by poverty rate or school size.



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Academic Progress Monitoring

- 62%
 - Systems for tracking student progress in academic interventions are adequate.



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Comments and Questions about Academic RTI/MTSS



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Behavior Supports



Behavior Staffing

- 1 out of 3
 - RTI programs for behavior are the responsibility of special education staff
 - Compare with 1:7 for academics
- 36%
 - Believed their schools have adequate expertise to administer RTI for behavior





Behavior Screening

- 18%
 - Do not have an process for identifying students in need of behavior support
 - Almost all indicated they are not aware of an RTI program for behavior in their school
- 10%
 - Conducting some type of universal screening
 - Student survey
 - Teacher observations and reports
- 49%
 - Use teacher nomination
 - Nomination methods are susceptible to subjectivity and bias



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Behavior Progress Monitoring

- 36% Believed their systems for tracking student progress in behavior interventions was adequate



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Comments and Questions about Behavior RTI/MTSS



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Resources



Resources

- 37%
 - Have adequate time to provide RTI programs for their students
- 31%
 - Have enough staff.
- Worth noting:
 - Administrators largely support RTI efforts



Challenges

- Lack of classroom teacher buy-in and participation
- Inadequate time
- Inadequate resources
- Increasing frequency and severity of student behavioral support needs
- Inadequate options for behavior interventions
- Unclear or inconsistent expectations
- Lack of suitable data collection or tracking systems
- Inconsistencies in resources and practices across grade levels
- Lack of parent support



Specific Resource Needs

- Training for teachers to provide specific interventions
- Intervention materials
- Funds designated for RTI programming
- Professional development about RTI for staff
- Clear guidelines for implementing interventions
- Space



Positive Impacts

- Improved student outcomes
 - academics, behaviors, relationships with teachers and peers
- Reduced number and more accuracy in referrals to special education
- Improved instructional practices
- Improved collaboration between and among classroom teachers and specialists
- Students receive help sooner
- Improved communication and consistency of practices



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Comments and Questions about Challenges, Resources, and Positive Effects



Recommendations

- Increase resources for schools to implement tiered supports
- Examine and implement funding strategies for MTSS resources
- Additional research to examine promising practices in Maine



Next Steps

- Legislature has commissioned MEPRI to investigate promising practices
 - Let us know if you are interested
- Will share findings when complete



Additional Resources

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
 - <https://casel.org/>
- Intervention Central
 - <https://www.interventioncentral.org/>
- National Center on Intensive Intervention
 - <https://intensiveintervention.org/>
- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports
 - <https://www.pbis.org/>
- RTI Action Network
 - <http://www.rtinetwork.org/>
- What Works Clearinghouse
 - <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>