

Scheduling RTI Supplemental Services in Middle and High Schools: Five Ideas

A basic expectation of RTI is that Tier 2 and 3 interventions should supplement, not replace, core instruction (Burns & Gibbons, 2008). Yet, finding the time in the schedules of struggling students to provide supplemental interventions can seem an insurmountable problem in middle and high schools. Indeed, in one recent survey, secondary-school principals flagged the issue of scheduling RTI interventions as one of the chief stumbling blocks to successful implementation of RTI (Sansosti, Noltemeyer & Goss, 2010).

There are no simple solutions to the thorny problem of scheduling RTI in secondary schools. Five possible scheduling strategies appear below—but they do have limitations. (For example, two ideas require course work outside of the school day, and depend upon active parent and student support and participation.) However, schools might find these suggestions to be a useful starting point as they brainstorm their own strategies to find the necessary time to deliver supplemental RTI services.

RTI Scheduling Strategy	Considerations
<p>RTI Period. The school sets aside one period per day (e.g., 35-45 minutes) during which all students have the opportunity to receive appropriate academic support. Tier 2/3 students are provided with interventions during this period. Non-RTI students may use this time as a study hall or for other academically relevant activities.</p>	<p>Schools are often inventive in finding the time to schedule a schoolwide RTI period: (1) One idea is to trim a brief amount of time (e.g., five minutes) from each class period in the daily schedule to free up sufficient time for a stand-alone period. (2) In schools in which staff by contract must report before students or remain for a period after student dismissal each day, the school might lengthen the student day to overlap with the morning or afternoon additional staff time, potentially freeing up at least some of the minutes needed to cobble together an RTI period.</p>
<p>Zero Period. The school creates an optional period before the official start of the school day. During that 'zero period', students can elect to take core or elective courses. Those students needing RTI support can take an essential class during zero period, freeing up a time-slot during the school day to receive their RTI assistance.</p>	<p>This option requires that staff teaching zero-period classes receive extra compensation or adjustment of their school-day teaching schedule. Also, parents and students must make a firm commitment to attend zero-period classes, as these course entail additional work and potential inconvenience—including an earlier wake-up time and home responsibility for transportation.</p>
<p>Credit Recovery. A school that has access to</p>	<p>The credit-recovery option requires that a student</p>

<p>online 'credit recovery' courses offers a struggling student the option to take a core course online (via credit recovery) on his or her own time. This option frees up a time-slot during the school day for that student to get RTI assistance.</p>	<p>be self-motivated and willing to take on extra work in order to access RTI help. While this option may be a good fit for some students, many may lack the motivation and skill-set necessary for success in an online course taken outside of the school day.</p>
<p>Core Course with Extended Time. The school creates two-period sections of selected core-area classes (e.g., English, Introductory Algebra). General-education students are recruited for these extended-time sections because they were found through academic screening and/or archival records to need additional time to master course concepts and/or complete assigned work. The two-period course affords sufficient time for the teacher to provide core instruction and (at least potentially) to provide supplemental interventions in such areas as literacy.</p>	<p>Students placed in an extended-time core course that occupies two class periods may have to give up or postpone the opportunity to take another course.</p> <p>The extended-time course can be made more effective if the school can assign additional staff (e.g., co-teacher; trained paraprofessional) to push into the setting for at least part of the class to provide additional, more individualized support to struggling students.</p>
<p>Study Hall Schedule Coordinated with RTI Services. Using academic screening and/or archival records, the school identifies students who require RTI support. These students are scheduled as a bloc in a common study hall.</p> <p>The school then schedules RTI services at the same time as the study hall. Reading teachers, other trained interventionists, and/or tutors run short-term (5-10 week) Tier 2/3 group or individual sessions.</p> <p>Students are recruited from the study hall and matched to the appropriate RTI service based on shared need. They are discharged from the RTI service and rejoin the study hall if they show sufficient improvement. (NOTE: If the study hall meets daily, students in RTI groups who are in less-intensive interventions may be scheduled for alternate days between study hall and RTI groups.)</p> <p>This model is fluid: After each 5-10 week period, new RTI groups or tutoring assignments can be</p>	<p>A school that puts students with a shared intervention need into the same study hall should take care that these students do not feel stigmatized or singled out because of their academic delays.</p> <p>To expand the pool of RTI interventionists available during the common study hall, the school may wish to recruit paraprofessionals, community volunteers, or other non-instructional personnel to serve as tutors. Of course, these personnel will require training in research-based intervention practices, as well as ongoing supervision by school personnel.</p>

created, with students again being matched to these services based on need.	
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References

Burns, M. K., & Gibbons, K. A. (2008). *Implementing response-to-intervention in elementary and secondary schools*. Routledge: New York.

Sansosti, F. J., Noltemeyer, A., & Goss, S. (2010). Principals' perceptions of the importance and availability of response to intervention practices within high school settings. *School Psychology Review, 39*, 286-295.