Ready, Get Set, Stall: False Starts and How to Avoid Them on the Road to RtI
Humble Independent School District, TX

With 32 schools, over 30,000 students, and 1800 teachers, Humble ISD is listed among the 25 fastest growing of Texas’ 600+ school districts. The school district has been in the process of implementing RtI for five years and has learned a lot along the way, including the need for systematic communication between and across all areas of instruction and instructional support. Initial funding for RtI implementation came from special education, and involving the Curriculum and Instruction Department and other general education stakeholders in the process became critical as more schools became involved. Challenges also included acceptance of RtI methodology by teachers and the development of a common language for all professionals. Participants in this session will learn about the successes and challenges of RtI implementation, professional development strategies the school district implemented, and, from the experience of a school-based school psychologist and a school principal, what worked, what didn’t, and why.

Multi-level Collaborative Problem Solving for School-based Intervention Teams
School District of Hillsborough County, FL

The School District of Hillsborough County, Florida, the ninth largest in the country, serves over 195,000 students, 14% of whom are in special education. The school district’s intervention model, Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT), is a multi-level collaborative problem-solving model with an emphasis on the implementation of meaningful and successful interventions in general education. Support increases to the general education teacher involved in addressing the needs of students who are non-responsive to intervention. The model was introduced in Hillsborough County five years ago and is now being implemented in all schools. Professional Development Strategies include training the core members of the STAT in each school so that they understand their role in supporting the team process. Participants in this session will learn about the STAT model, its progress monitoring system, critical decision points for increasing the intensity of interventions, and the positive results in student response that can be obtained when the model is implemented efficiently and effectively. The central role of the school principal in providing support for the process, opportunities for continued training, and monitoring the consistency of interventions will also be discussed.
How Do We Get There From Here? Bridging Policy to Practice: The School District of Philadelphia’s Implementation of Pennsylvania’s 3 Tier RtI Model
School District of Philadelphia, PA

Presenters in this session will share how the School District of Philadelphia has used the “educational best practices” infrastructure introduced in Pennsylvania over the years to support the RtI process as it is now being rolled out across the state. In the fall of 2005, the Pennsylvania Department of Education introduced the Pennsylvania 3 Tier Response to Intervention Model to all intermediate units and school districts. The Pennsylvania model is an integrated approach incorporating General, Remedial and Special Education. It is based on a functional perspective, focused on academic and behavioral growth of all students, with student needs existing on a continuum with resources organized and provided in direct proportion to student need. Pennsylvania uses a problem solving model grounded in the implementation of scientifically research-based practices. Its “Best Practice” approach considers all system variables (child, teacher, environment) and results in objective and measurable interventions.

The session was prepared for early adopters/implementers and focuses on three major dimensions of successful RtI implementation and the first two components of Philadelphia’s implementation of the Pennsylvania RtI framework.

Getting Our Ducks in Order (Putting the Foundation for RtI in Place)
Miami-Dade County Public Schools, FL

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is a large, multi-cultural, urban school-district including over 350 schools and 350,000 students. Encouraged by the re-authorization of IDEA and supported by significant scientific research, the school district’s Departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, and Psychological Services designed a service delivery model “Student Teacher Support Team (ST²)” for implementation during the 2005-06 school year in 22 schools identified as at risk of failure. The core components of ST² are: 1) universal screening, 2) benchmarking, 3) diagnostic assessment, 4) data-based decisions for the delivery of professional development, 5) data-based decisions for guiding instruction, and 6) response to intervention determined by results of progress monitoring. This session will highlight the foundation components needed for RtI and illustrate how, through collaboration, RtI can be implemented in any school or school district. The very promising qualitative and quantitative results of the first year of implementation of ST² will be shared, as will the potholes and bumps Miami-Dade experienced in laying of the foundation for ST². This presentation is intended for participants at any phase of the implementation process.
Improving Student Outcomes Through Progress Monitoring
National Center on Student Progress Monitoring, Wash. DC

The validity of Response of to Intervention and Early Intervening approaches is directly linked to the validity of the measures used to identify and track students at risk for failing to achieve adequate yearly progress and for identification as students with disabilities. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring (NCSPM) provides information and technical assistance related to the use of student progress monitoring in assessing student achievement and the effectiveness of instruction. In this session a NCSPM staff member will provide an overview of common approaches to RtI and Early Intervening Services (EIS), and the critical role of formal progress monitoring strategies in the successful implementation of RtI and EIS. The use of student progress monitoring data for decision making at each RtI stage will be demonstrated using graphs of students with different patterns of performance. Decisions and options for schools and districts in developing and implementing EIS and RtI will be outlined, and the implications of different options examined. Finally, the process used by the NCSPM for reviewing commercially available progress monitoring tools will be described, along with an overview of a consumer-friendly, online chart showing the features of the progress monitoring tools available from various vendors along with descriptive information such as cost, system requirements, number of alternate forms, and training availability.

Why and How to Develop a Climate of Change from the State Department to Individual School District Level in the Adoption of an RtI Model
Metropolitan School Districts of Lawrence and Wayne Townships, IN

This session will share how a group of local special education directors created a cohort to study various models of RtI and how it was able to develop consensus to support a recommendation to its State Department for a recommended model. The recommendation resulted in funding and support for a pilot project in six different school districts and a statewide expectation of change from a discrepancy model to an RtI model for identifying students with suspected special education needs. The presentation will be geared to those at the early stages of considering/adopting an RtI approach and will cover the following points:

- How we got started
- What we did to bring the State Department on board
- How we piloted our project
- How we spread the word of RtI throughout the state
- Who we identified as key people to target for meaningful, statewide change
- How we brought school psychologists on board
- How we brought school superintendents and district curriculum players on board
- How we worked through belief systems
- How we connected academic and behavior tiers for a recommended model
Response to Intervention: Cincinnati’s Framework for Implementation
Cincinnati Public Schools, OH

The Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) has adopted the Pyramid of Interventions framework which supports educational systems where all children learn and achievement gaps are diminished. The CPS Pyramid of Interventions framework is adapted from the nationally recognized three-tiered model of intervention designed to provide prevention and intervention supports for all children based on scientifically validated strategies of support. Response to Intervention is measured and the decision to increase frequency and/or intensity of interventions is data driven. One of the tools developed to provide professional development and ongoing support is the Pyramid of Interventions Quick Guide. The “Quick Guide” is designed to serve as a user-friendly reference and resource for a wide audience of educators, parents, and community partners to understand how to best support the educational needs of all learners. In this presentation, CPS leaders will share the Pyramid of Interventions Quick Guide, explain the school district’s comprehensive framework of providing services and interventions to children in a timely manner, and explain how CPS measures the response to interventions provided and make educational decisions accordingly. Additionally, they will share clips from their training DVD and companion technical manual.

Instructional Support Team
Norfolk Public Schools, VA

Oceanair Elementary School is a Title 1 school in Norfolk, Virginia, with a population of approximately 555 students. The school serves students pre-kindergarten through fifth grade and the student body is extremely transient. The Instructional Support Team (IST) model is a state-adopted, general education initiative focused on providing teachers with research-based effective instructional strategies that can be used with all students. IST is now in its sixth year of implementation at Oceanair and has had a dramatic impact on special education referral and overall student achievement. This presentation highlights how the IST process worked at Oceanair. The presenters include a general education teacher who has utilized the IST process in her classroom, the full-time IST teacher, and the school psychologist who serves on the IST. Participants in this session will learn about the philosophy underlying the IST model in use at Oceanair Elementary, the various stages of IST, and critical factors which must be present in each stage in order to be successful.
RtI: Changing the Role of the Intervention Assistance Team
Akron Public Schools, OH

Akron Public Schools, located in Akron, Ohio, serves approximately 28,000 students. The school district is in its second year of RtI development and first year of large scale implementation. The Pyramid of Learning, which is adapted from the Ohio Department of Education Integrated Systems Model, integrates both academic and behavioral components as part of a cohesive academic system of support for improving the performance of ALL learners. The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) plays a critical role in the implementation and sustainability of the Pyramid of Learning. Schools have the capability to establish a hierarchy of interventions; however, methods must be put in place to ensure appropriate implementation. The IAT focus is on a group standard protocol and pre-established criteria rather than the traditional individual child problem-solving or pre-referral model. IATs look at groups of students to create data driven decision-making processes that evaluate the effectiveness and fidelity of interventions and maintain the integrity of interventions through continual progress monitoring. This presentation will explore the changing role of the IAT as well as the supports IATs require as they implement the Pyramid of Learning. This presentation is intended for early implementers.

An Evolving RtI Model
Pittsburgh Public Schools, PA

Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) is a diverse urban school district with over 31,000 students. Over the last four years, PPS has integrated progress monitoring into early intervening services leading to an evolving RtI model. PPS is laying the groundwork to infuse RtI into day-to-day instruction. Consensus building has been achieved through a series of professional development activities involving teachers, administrators, and support staff. Training has focused on the need for data driven decision-making to guide instruction. Curriculum based measurement and functional behavioral assessment data support the RtI process. Participants will learn how PPS implemented the RtI model within an already existing instructional support team process. Lessons learned include:

- monitoring behavior is challenging
- goal setting and baseline data are critical
- data analysis and decision making rules are integral
- graphing RtI data provides documentation of fidelity to the intervention plan
- RtI data provide an informed decision making process when determining a need for further evaluation

Data presented will include individual student graphs to aggregate information regarding the entire process. Using RtI data for special education eligibility remains challenging. Early efforts have been greeted with enthusiasm and commitment to continue the exploration of RtI.
Implementation of RtI Through the Assistance Team Pilot Program  
*Greenville County School District, SC*

Greenville County School District serves over 65,000 students in 48 elementary schools, 17 middle schools, and 14 high schools. Seventeen percent (17%) of these students are currently classified as having a disability and approximately 700 students per year are identified as learning disabled. The school district’s first stage of RtI implementation began in 2005 with the implementation of the Assistance Team Pilot Program in two elementary schools that had a history of high special education referrals. This presentation focuses on the over-identification of students with learning disabilities and the lack of intensive/appropriate interventions in general education. The A-Team Pilot Program is presented as a solution to address these challenges. The program’s key components include early screening, direct interventions, progress monitoring, and a site-based steering committee to monitor fidelity of implementation. The A-Team Pilot Program successes include reduction of at-risk students with reading difficulties, expansion of the program to seven additional schools, strong principal and faculty “buy in”, and the involvement of teachers of English Language Learners in providing direct interventions.

Jackson GATOR Time – RtI for ALL Kids  
*Fresno Unified School District, CA*

Jackson Elementary School is located within the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD), Fresno, CA. FUSD is the fourth largest district in California. For the past three years, Jackson has implemented a model known as “GATOR Time” to provide leveled and targeted instruction for all students in the area of language arts. The systematic structure of GATOR Time enabled the school to implement a RtI approach to student’s learning and has evolved into an effective system for early identification and intervention for all students. GATOR Time has resulted in pulling the school out of program improvement status and consistently meeting its AYP targets. Additionally, the number of special education referrals has decreased. Jackson Elementary has been recognized as a model school in the district and was recently featured in a statewide RtI Web cast sponsored by the California Department of Education. Other FUSD schools have started to develop their own intervention models based on the Jackson approach. Data from those schools have shown positive growth on DIBELS and on larger outcome measurements such as the California Standards Test (CST). This presentation would be appropriate for Collaborative members in any phase of RtI development.
The Kalamazoo Promise
Kalamazoo Public Schools, MI

The Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) continues to work on implementing Response to Intervention as a team effort among regular educators, special educators, ancillary staff, parents, community members, and administrators. The effort includes initiatives for assisting academic achievement as well as positive behavior supports. The school district is fortunate to have a combination of supports to implement RtI. These include Reading First Schools, Michigan Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) Grant, community mental health supports and others. The support systems provide training and resources for staff and support personnel to make necessary changes. MiBLSi is a Mandated Activities Project (MAP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) sponsored through the Michigan Department of Education. It stands for Michigan’s Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative – a multi-level system of support model that incorporates RtI practices. In this session, participants will learn about how RtI started in KPS and how the community supports students in this effort. The additional community supports include The Kalamazoo Communities in Schools Foundation, Kalamazoo Community School-based Mental Health services and others. All of the projects and support systems include all students and have positively impacted the special education referral rate and inclusion.

Addressing Disproportionality by Building Infrastructure to Support RtI Implementation in a Large Urban School District
Clark County School District, NV

IDEA ’04 highlights the need for school districts to identify and address issues related to disproportionality, the over-identification and over-representation of minority students in special education. Further guidance is provided by the statute in terms of encouraging school districts to explore RtI methodologies and to adopt research-based interventions to increase student achievement. However, individual states and school districts are ultimately responsible for defining RtI methodologies in operational terms. The Clark County School District (CCSD) has moved proactively in developing data-based decision making procedures related to disproportionality, collaborative problem solving, and RtI. Data analysis pertaining to relative risk ratios for disproportionality and referral and outcome data for the Student Intervention Program provide the context for strategic planning in the development of (school-wide) intervention systems, to include RtI. The specific RtI procedures developed by CCSD to assist in the assessment of a student with a suspected learning disability will be presented in this session. The successes and challenges faced by a large urban school district in operationally defining RtI procedures, practices, and implementation will also be discussed. This session is for both early and advanced implementers.