



RTI, Classroom Quality and Professional Development in One Early Reading First Project

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Conference of the Teacher Education Division
Council for Exceptional Children

Austin, Texas, November, 2011

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Objectives of the Presentation

- Provide context of this ERF project
- Describe
 - structure of RTI
 - classroom quality rating system (CRIS) developed by the project
 - professional development
- Demonstrate linkages among CRIS, RTI, and professional development

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CONTEXT: Early Reading First & The DELL-D Project

DELL-D - Developing Early Language & Literacy in Danville

- Early Reading First
 - U.S. Dept. of Education (3-year projects, with 4th year carry-over)
 - Communities with high number of low-income families
 - Focus on emergent language & literacy in 3-4 year old children
 - Partnerships with and among community entities providing care & education to young children prior to kindergarten entry

About Danville



- **Population of 33,000 (2005)**
- **County seat of Vermilion County, population 84,000**
- **Located on old fur-trading road between Lake Michigan and the south**
- **Irish and Eastern European immigrants, as well as African-Americans, came in the late 1800s to work in the mines.**
- **With the coming of large GM plant, it became a vibrant blue-collar community that easily switched from mining to manufacturing.**
- **With the closure of GM in the 1990s, Danville and Vermilion County went into an economic slide.**

DELL-D Partners

- University of Illinois (Early Childhood & Parenting Collaborative, ECAP)
- Danville Partners
 - School District
 - Head Start (East Central Illinois Community Action Agency)
 - DACC Child Care Center (Danville Area Community College)

Settings

- 10 classrooms (14 classes of children)
 - 4 District classes (8 half/day), in same elementary school
 - 3 Head Start classes, in two different buildings
 - 3 child care classes in an early childhood center at community college (one a partnership class with Head Start)
- Half-day (8) & full-day (6) classrooms

Children (Year 3 example)

- Total of 258 children in project (191 for full year)
- 52% going to Kindergarten in following year
- 80% from low income families
- 35% Caucasian, 47% African-American, 12% bi-racial, 6% other
- 5% dual language learners
- 12% with IEPs plus 4% with speech plans
- 22% in RTI (Tier 2) at any one time; 40% qualified for RTI across the year

Teachers

- Wide range of backgrounds
 - Education - CDA to Master' s
 - Certification - District teachers only
 - Experience - 1st year to over 20 years
 - Ethnicity - Caucasian & African-American teachers in all settings

ERF Requirements

- Research-based emergent literacy curriculum
- Literacy-rich classroom environment (ELLCO)
- Professional development (substantial, intensive, ongoing)
- Screening & monitoring (PPVT, PALS Pre-K capital letters)
- Evaluation of outcomes (classrooms; children)

ERF Requirement: EMERGENT LITERACY CURRICULUM

- TROPHIES Pre-K (Harcourt)
- Theme-based – 25 themes across 25 weeks
- Many extra project-developed materials
- Emergent literacy areas emphasized included alphabetic knowledge, language, comprehension, print concepts, phonological awareness

ERF Requirement: RICH LITERACY ENVIRONMENT

- Purchase of materials, supplies, furnishings to support emergent literacy teaching & learning
- Use of quality rating systems
 - ELLCO – Emergent Language & Literacy Classroom Observation (physical environment)
 - CLASS – Classroom Observation Scoring System (teaching interactions and language environment)
 - Other quality rating systems and checklists that included environmental components

ERF Requirement: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Teacher Institutes (30 hours/year)
- Monthly small group meetings (20 hours/year)
- In-class coaching – 100 + hours/year in each classroom

ERF Requirement: EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES

- Classrooms
 - ELLCO (Emergent Language & Literacy Classroom Observation)
 - Criterion scores
 - Change in scores and percent achieving criterion
- Children
 - Criterion scores for PPVT and PALS upper case letters
 - Change in scores and percent achieving criterion

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RTI: MORE Language/Literacy For SOME Children

Context for implementing RTI

- **No Pre-K RTI existed in any of the partnering sites – most were unfamiliar with RTI**
- **Maximum of 2 adults in classroom; some classrooms with only 1 adult**
- **In District**
 - Kindergarten RTI just beginning, with plans to move it into Pre-K
 - decision-making teams for RTI not involved with pre-kindergarten
 - ½ day (2 ½ hour) sessions

National Context for Pre-K RTI

New Emphasis

- Little research on Pre-K RTI
- Little guidance for specifics of:
 - Assessment or monitoring progress
 - Selecting children
 - Content of RTI
 - Logistics of who, when, where

What RTI Looked Like in DELL-D

- Small group instruction two days/week, using scripts (story book scripts, phonological awareness scripts)
 - Linked to TROPHIES themes
- Assessment (all children)
 - Fall, winter, spring assessments using PPVT, PALS (4 areas), IGDIs (3 areas), state comprehension measure)
- Monitoring
 - Winter and spring assessments
 - CBMs every 5 weeks (end of curriculum unit)
- Specific criteria for selecting children for RTI based on above assessments (status and progress)

Tier 2 protocol

- Specific small-group RTI process for each day
 - Day 1
 - Storybook – picture walk; 1st reading (interactive reading format)
 - Phonological awareness
 - Day 2
 - Storybook – 2nd reading (dialogic reading format)
 - Phonological awareness

Staffing RTI

- Years 1 & 2 – Tutors used to implement RTI
 - Teachers (retired) from community
 - 2 days/week, full half-day in classroom
- Years 3 & 4 – Some teachers took over RTI, others continued with tutors in classroom

Challenges to Implementing RTI

- Variation in quality among classrooms
 - Experience with implementation and use of assessment
 - Experience with and beliefs about systematic instruction
 - Experience planning and managing time and personnel for small group instruction
- Understanding of RTI as “beyond Tier 1”
- Systemic support within programs (staff, decision-making support, leadership knowledge)

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CRIS: DELL-D' s Quality Rating System

CRIS - Classroom Recognition & Improvement System

- What it included - ELLCO ratings, curriculum fidelity, rating scales (instructional strategies), use of data to inform teaching
- Why we developed it
 - Initial rate of classroom improvement began to flatten out
 - Variation among classrooms increased – how to address training needs of each classroom
- What we used it for
 - Recognize classroom growth - celebration
 - Focus professional development planning
 - Set classroom goals to guide coaching
 - ** Identify which classrooms would begin to learn & use RTI (beginning Year 3)

How It Worked ...

- Levels of accomplishment
 - Initially – Bronze, Silver, Gold
 - Added late in Year 3 - Solid Gold (“maintain gold”), Platinum
- Specific criteria to move to next level
- Specific steps within each level
- Recognized for steps within areas, areas within levels, & achievement of new levels



CRIS PROGRESS CHART

(REVISED 8/16/10)

	ELLCO Sections	BRONZE Classroom	SILVER Classroom	GOLD Classroom	SOLID GOLD
	GCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 7 items at 3 or above (minimum of 21/35 pts.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5/7 items at 4 or above Remaining items at 3 or above (minimum of 26/35 pts.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3/7 items at 5 Remaining items at 4 or above (minimum total of 31/35 pts.) 	Maintain all benchmarks at the GOLD Level for a minimum of 2 months
	LLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 12 items at 3 or above (minimum of 36/60 points) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7/12 items at 4 or above Remaining items at 3 or above (minimum of 43/60 pts.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5/12 items at 5 Remaining items at 4 or above (minimum of 53/60 pts.) 	
	Total	57/95 points	69/95 points	84/95 points	
FIDELITY	29 segments of TROPHIES weekly theme plan	Minimum of 22/29 curriculum segments, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 themes in a row (approx. 3 weeks) 	Minimum of 22/29 curriculum segments, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 units in a row (approx. 2 mos.) 	Minimum of 22/29 curriculum sections, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-annual fidelity check by DELL-D staff 	
	Book Reading	Extra book reading included a minimum of 1 day/week	Extra book reading included a minimum of 2 days/week, with repeated reading	Extra book reading included a minimum of 3 days/week, with repeated reading	
TEACHING INTERACTIONS	Teaching Strategies Checklists	60% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time (small group) (2 consecutive observations)	70% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time & Center checklists (2 consecutive observations)	80% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time & Center checklists (2 consecutive observations)	
	Curriculum Integration (Creative Curriculum framework)	At least 2 literacy centers (e.g., writing, library, computer, listening) extend on theme and described to children (consistent for 4 weeks)	At least 2 literacy and 1 additional center extend on theme (dramatic play, blocks) and include literacy focus; described to children (consistent for 2 weeks) 50% of boxes checked on embedding opportunities checklists (3/4 observations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBRR areas Teaching interactions across a day 	At least 4 centers extend on theme and include literacy focus; described to children (consistent for 2 weeks) 60% of boxes checked on embedding opportunities checklists (2 consecutive observations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBRR areas Teaching interactions 	
	Making Curriculum Decisions	Complete CBMs (old or new) on 3 "average" children by unit end date; 2 consecutive units	Complete CBMs (old or new) on 3 children scoring <85 on PPVT and on 3 "average" children by unit end date; use data to plan and implement SBRR skill practice during non-TROPHIES activities 3 out of 4 observations (at least 1 child from each group).	Complete CBMs (old or new) on all children by unit end date; use data to plan and implement SBRR skill focus during non-TROPHIES theme: 2 children in each SBRR area, 2 consecutive non-TROPHIES themes	

Some examples of changing criteria across levels

Sample Criteria	Bronze	Silver	Gold
ELLCO Score	- all items =>3 - 57/95 total	- majority items => 4 - 69/95 total	- 40% items = 5 - 84/95 total
Curriculum Fidelity	- 22/29 curriculum segments, 3 themes in a row	- 22/29 curriculum segments, 2 units in a row	- 22/29 curriculum segments, semi-annual checks
Teaching Strategy Checklists	60% items	70% items	80% items
Making Curriculum Decisions	CBMs 3 children	CBMs 6 children	CBMs all children

PLATINUM LEVEL: Becoming a Leadership Classroom

(Revised 8/16/10)

Section	Benchmarks	Benchmark Criteria
Refine Intentional Teaching Skills	Maintain fidelity and ELLCO scores at GOLD Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fidelity checked 2x year • ELLCO checked Fall and Spring
	Demonstrate high CLASS scores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Support 6.0 or > • Classroom Organization 6.0 or > • Instructional Support 5.5 or >
	Complete <i>self-directed</i> project to improve instructional skill: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select skill • Video tape • Take baseline data from video • Set target • Practice/take data to monitor progress • Meet target • Video skill at target 	Select skill from DELL-D checklists OR An area of Instructional Support on CLASS
Plan and Implement RTI	Assess children for RTI (new CBMs)	Classroom team performs all steps of the RTI process
	Select children for RTI	
	Plan RTI small groups	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematically address children's needs in relation to SBRR areas 	
	Implement small groups as planned	
	Track child progress in RTI	
Use child progress data to make decisions about instruction and maintaining in RTI		

Percent of Classrooms at Each Level at End of Each Year

Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Bronze	00	80	100	100
Silver	00	70	90	100
Gold	00	50	70	100
Solid Gold	00	00	50	70
Platinum	00	00	00	00



Relationship between CRIS and RTI

Why connect RTI and CRIS?

- New emphasis on RTI in district, including decision to start RTI in Pre-Kindergarten
- Disparities among classrooms in “readiness” for RTI
- Moving beyond the support provided by the grant – sustaining changes in classrooms

Connecting changes in CRIS to RTI

- Toward end of Year 3
 - Accomplish “gold” on CRIS, begin to take over RTI
 - Period of transition with tutors remaining in the classroom and teachers implementing the RTI protocol
- End Year 3, beginning Year 4
 - Added “solid gold” as a new level (based on inconsistent maintenance of gold in two child care classrooms – not yet “ready” to do RTI)



Relationships between CRIS and Professional Development

What the CRIS did for professional development

- Provided a way to summarize accomplishments and needs across ALL classrooms, SOME classrooms, and INDIVIDUAL classrooms
- Influenced planning for all professional development formats
 - Institutes
 - Small groups
 - Coaching

Changes in Professional Development in Relation to CRIS

- Year 1
 - 50 hours of teacher weekend institutes (5 meetings)
 - 100 hours of coaching in each classroom
- Year 2
 - 30 hours of weekend institutes (3 meetings)
 - 20 hours of monthly meetings with small groups, content matched to targets on CRIS
 - 100 hours of coaching in each classroom
- Year 3
 - Maintain institutes and small group meetings as above
- Year 4
 - Same as above
 - Switch to bi-weekly coaching for “solid gold” teachers

General Content Organization Across Years and Formats

Year	Teacher Institutes (Whole Group)	Monthly Meetings (Small Group)	In-Class Coaching (Individual Classroom)
1	Basics	n.a.	Basics
2	Strengthening the basics	Basics Strengthening the basics	Basics Strengthening the basics
3	Strengthening the basics	Basics Strengthening the basics Going beyond the basics	Basics Strengthening the basics Going beyond the basics
4	Going beyond the basics	Strengthening the basics Going beyond the basics Implementing RTI	Basics Strengthening the basics Going beyond the basics Implementing RTI

Using the CRIS for coaching

Overcoming the “but HER coach doesn’t do that!”

- CRIS made coaching expectations explicit and transparent for each classroom
 - Coaching goals were related to what classrooms were working on, at what level – different for each classroom
 - Teachers could help set their own goals, using the CRIS and supporting data
 - Teachers knew what and why observations and coaching were focused on specific areas

Sample: Classroom coaching targets for working toward Silver on CRIS



- Improving environment
- Scheduling, planning and managing small group teaching
- Increasing curriculum integration across more centers
- Practicing instructional strategies to support listening comprehension (CLASS)

Sample: Classroom coaching targets for maintaining Gold on CRIS



- Instructional strategies to support language and cognition (CLASS)
- Planning for individual differences
 - Extra small group, with targeted instruction, using RTI model
 - One-to-one instruction - embed additional learning opportunities for specific children in specific areas



End of Year 4: Transitions

End of Year 4: Which classrooms were doing what?

- “Solid Gold” - implementing RTI, tutors no longer present, fewer coaching hours
 - 4 district classrooms
 - 1 child care/Head Start classroom (jointly funded, located in child care center)
- Working on maintaining gold - in transition, with RTI tutors still present
 - 2 child care classrooms (located in child are center)
- Achieved gold at end of Year 4 – RTI tutors still present
 - 3 Head Start classrooms

Summary

- Classroom data, summarized on the CRIS, was a primary source of information for planning professional development (institutes, small group meetings, coaching)
- Achievement of higher levels on the CRIS guided judgments of readiness to implement RTI
- At the higher levels of the CRIS, RTI became a target of small group training and coaching for some classrooms

The District's perspective ...

- DELL-D gave the school district a head start on Pre-K RTI
 - Professional development and CRIS resulted in high quality Pre-K classrooms that will remain in place
 - Project provided a way to think about which classrooms have a solid Tier 1 foundation and are ready to implement RTI
 - DELL-D teachers benefited from materials, procedures, and training in RTI as well as in Tier 1
 - Assessment, using data to make decisions
 - RTI framework and materials
 - DELL-D experience allowed the district to try out Pre-K RTI procedures & structures in a few Pre-K classrooms before including all classrooms

Challenges post-grant

- Maintaining quality rating system as a basis for professional development and RTI
- Continuing professional development that is intensive and individualized
- Providing systemic supports to maintain gains in Tier 1 and to achieve high quality Tier 1 with new teachers
- Providing systemic supports for Pre-K RTI
 - Continuity with RTI in higher grades while maintaining expertise related to how young children learn
 - Team processes within and across buildings with EC classrooms
 - Clarification of relationship with special education (who owns RTI); how children with IEPs fit into the picture in inclusive classrooms

Contact Information



The DELL-D Project

(Developing Early Language and Literacy in Danville)

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