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

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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
CONTEXT: Early Reading First & The DELL-D Project
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% biracial, 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
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)
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLCO Sections</th>
<th>BRONZE Classroom</th>
<th>SILVER Classroom</th>
<th>GOLD Classroom</th>
<th>SOLID GOLD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCE</td>
<td>All 7 items at 3 or above (minimum of 21/35 pts.)</td>
<td>5/7 items at 4 or above</td>
<td>3/7 items at 5</td>
<td>Maintain benchmarks at the GOLD Level for a minimum of 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLE</td>
<td>All 12 items at 3 or above (minimum of 36/60 points)</td>
<td>7/12 items at 4 or above (minimum of 43/60 pts.)</td>
<td>5/12 items at 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>57/95 points</td>
<td>69/95 points</td>
<td>84/95 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 segments of TROPHIES weekly theme plan</td>
<td>Minimum of 22/29 curriculum segments, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented</td>
<td>Minimum of 22/29 curriculum segments, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented</td>
<td>Minimum of 22/29 curriculum sections, activities (or equivalents) in plan and implemented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 themes in a row (approx. 3 weeks)</td>
<td>2 units in a row (approx. 2 mos.)</td>
<td>Semi-annual fidelity check by DELL-D staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Reading</td>
<td>Extra book reading included a minimum of 1 day/week</td>
<td>Extra book reading included a minimum of 2 days/week, with repeated reading</td>
<td>Extra book reading included a minimum of 3 days/week, with repeated reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies Checklists</td>
<td>60% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time (small group) (2 consecutive observations)</td>
<td>70% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time &amp; Center checklists (2 consecutive observations)</td>
<td>80% of items on each of Circle-Time, Story-Time, Activity-Time &amp; Center checklists (2 consecutive observations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Integration (Creative Curriculum framework)</td>
<td>At least 2 literacy centers (e.g., writing, library, computer, listening) extend on theme and described to children (consistent for 4 weeks)</td>
<td>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)</td>
<td>At least 4 centers extend on theme and include literacy focus; described to children (consistent for 2 weeks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>---</strong></td>
<td>50% of boxes checked on embedding opportunities checklists (3/4 observations)</td>
<td>60% of boxes checked on embedding opportunities checklists (2 consecutive observations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>SBRR areas</strong></td>
<td><strong>SBRR areas</strong></td>
<td><strong>SBRR areas</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Teaching interactions across a day</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teaching interactions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teaching interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Curriculum Decisions</td>
<td>Complete CBMs (old or new) on 3 “average” children by unit end date; 2 consecutive units</td>
<td>Complete CBMs (old or new) on 3 children scoring &lt;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).</td>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Implement small groups with children in Tier 2 (RTI) using DELL-D forms and scripts; new CBMs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some examples of changing criteria across levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Criteria</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Gold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELLCO Score</td>
<td>- all items =&gt;3</td>
<td>- majority items =&gt; 4</td>
<td>- 40% items = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 57/95 total</td>
<td>- 69/95 total</td>
<td>- 84/95 total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Fidelity</td>
<td>- 22/29 curriculum segments, 3 themes in a row</td>
<td>- 22/29 curriculum segments, 2 units in a row</td>
<td>- 22/29 curriculum segments, semi-annual checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategy Checklists</td>
<td>60% items</td>
<td>70% items</td>
<td>80% items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Curriculum Decisions</td>
<td>CBMs 3 children</td>
<td>CBMs 6 children</td>
<td>CBMs all children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PLATINUM LEVEL: Becoming a Leadership Classroom**  
(Revised 8/16/10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Benchmark Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain fidelity and ELLCO scores at GOLD Levels</td>
<td>• Fidelity checked 2x year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine Intentional Teaching</td>
<td>Demonstrate high CLASS scores</td>
<td>• ELLCO checked Fall and Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Complete <em>self-directed</em> project to improve instructional skill:</td>
<td>• Emotional Support 6.0 or &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Select skill</td>
<td>• Classroom Organization 6.0 or &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Video tape</td>
<td>• Instructional Support 5.5 or &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take baseline data from video</td>
<td>Select skill from DELL-D checklists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Set target</td>
<td>OR An area of Instructional Support on CLASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practice/take data to monitor progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meet target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Video skill at target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and Implement RTI</td>
<td>Assess children for RTI (new CBMs)</td>
<td>Classroom team performs all steps of the RTI process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select children for RTI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan RTI small groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systematically address children’s needs in relation to SBRR areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement small groups as planned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Track child progress in RTI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use child progress data to make decisions about instruction and maintaining in RTI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percent of Classrooms at Each Level at End of Each Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Gold</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher Institutes (Whole Group)</th>
<th>Monthly Meetings (Small Group)</th>
<th>In-Class Coaching (Individual Classroom)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basics</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Basics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strengthening the basics</td>
<td>Basics, Strengthening the basics</td>
<td>Basics, Strengthening the basics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strengthening the basics</td>
<td>Basics, Strengthening the basics, Going beyond the basics</td>
<td>Basics, Strengthening the basics, Going beyond the basics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Going beyond the basics</td>
<td>Strengthening the basics, Going beyond the basics, Implementing RTI</td>
<td>Basics, Strengthening the basics, Going beyond the basics, Implementing RTI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 care 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

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