

Problem Solving/Response to Intervention (PS/RtI) Evaluation

School-Based Leadership Team Survey Analysis

Research and Accountability

Pinellas County Schools

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Problem Solving / Response to Intervention (PS/RtI) Evaluation: School-Based Leadership Team Survey Analysis

This component of the PS/RtI evaluation examines responses to a survey submitted by those who had participated in trainings for school based leadership teams (SBLTs) during the 2010-2011 school year. School based leadership teams comprise individuals at the school level responsible for developing the PS/RtI framework and provide leadership to ensure successful implementation. It is necessary to understand how training provided to SBLTs can best support successful development and implementation of the PS/RtI framework at each of the 117 schools in the district. Responses to this survey provided insights to inform these efforts.

Method

The survey consisted of three questions with Likert scale responses ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’. Quantitative results are presented below for each item.

Respondents were also provided the opportunity to submit comments following each item. Two additional questions were asked to solicit additional feedback. These were: “What additional supports are needed for future implementation of PS/RtI at the school level?” and “Please provide any other feedback”. All comments were pooled and then examined to determine general themes across comments. These themes are summarized with example comments presented below each theme.

Results

Table 1: The Site Based Leadership Team (SBLT) training assisted with my acquisition of PS/RtI skill development.						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
N	9	8	23	132	44	216
%	4.2%	3.7%	10.6%	61.1%	20.4%	

A majority of respondents (81.5%) agreed that the SBLT training did assist with their acquisition of PS/RtI skill development.

Table 2: The SBLT training provided skills for implementation of PS/Rtl at the school level.						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
N	8	6	25	135	41	215
%	3.7%	2.8%	11.6%	62.8%	19.1%	

A majority of respondents (81.9%) agreed that the SBLT training provided skills for implementation of PS/Rtl at the school level.

Table 3: The SBLT format provided adequate time for us to collaborate as a SBLT.						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
N	11	17	23	104	58	213
%	5.2%	8.0%	10.8%	48.8%	27.2%	

A majority of respondents (76%) agreed that the SBLT format provided adequate time to collaborate as a SBLT.

Comments

The quantitative results presented above suggested a positive response to the training in response to more general overarching questions. Most of the comments submitted also supported this general positive impression as indicated in the first theme below. Additional themes presented in this section provide more specific feedback based upon the comments submitted by SBLT training participants. These themes highlight the importance of providing individualized training tailored to the needs of each school. These themes are followed by conclusions and recommendations concerning ways to best meet these needs going forward.

Positive Overall

As the quantitative ratings suggest, the overall response to the SBLT trainings was positive, with many comments suggesting that the trainings were presented well and were appreciated.

- ✓ Great trainers
- ✓ Your hard work and efforts are appreciated!
- ✓ The facilitators are always willing to walk us through questions that we have during the session.

- ✓ With each of these sessions we've moved more toward a way of work that allows us to focus on how these processes, skills and tools will be implemented with our specific issues. It is noticed, welcome and appreciated!

Group Planning Time

Comments also supported the need for group planning time and suggested that the opportunity to do so was strongly appreciated.

- ✓ I think the time to sit and collaborate, with guidance from the RtI trainers, is a valuable experience for us as a school team.
- ✓ The work time was excellent. It allowed us time as a Leadership Team to problem solve two school wide concerns that we are currently having.
- ✓ This is the most helpful piece--after being given some info and guidance to proceed.

Levels

The SBLT trainings are designed to differentiate among schools at different levels of implementation. However, comments suggested that mismatching the level of training with a school's level of implementation can still occur. When this occurs, it may create a perception that the training is not pertinent to the needs of the school in question. These comments highlighted the importance of using an individualized approach to training.

- ✓ This training would have been much more beneficial 3 years ago. We don't need this information now, we already know it.
- ✓ Most of the discussion/information were suggestions of different ideas/ways to implement strategies at our respective school. We've already implemented many different things and we really needed time to revisit our progress and to adjust future practices.
- ✓ Differentiate. Many schools are at different levels and for those who are ahead it is very frustrating to spend time on something already accomplished or in the works.
- ✓ The level of support that is needed varies from school to school. What we received on Tuesday was really not needed because most, if not all of the schools that attended are beyond that point. This information would have been more relevant when implementation of RtI first began several years ago. The day could have been shorter if lunch and breaks were shorter. I felt as if the instructors were trying to stretch out the day.

School-Based Data

Comments suggested that the training was designed to allow SBLT teams to collaborate with each other using their own data. It was this individualized hands-on training time that appeared to be particularly useful and necessary.

- ✓ Our team collaborated more than we ever have in the past at any of these trainings. We were able to use our own school's information to problem solve and that made it very useful!
- ✓ While it is necessary to receive pertinent information for implementation, there needs to be time allotted for the teams to actually work on their plans. The all-day format might be better designed to include time for teams to access their data to develop a school plan. Instead of using "scenarios" allow us to work with our own "real" cases making it relevant to our school. In this way, the teams are more apt to acquire a better understanding of the process and actually make sound decisions based on data.
- ✓ Yes, we had time and since we were working on our data it was worthwhile.
- ✓ Bring data to meetings so we can make sure we have processes in place or PDSA current processes
- ✓ continued support with use of data- how to most efficiently gather, clearly graph, and use decision rules
- ✓ Actually having our behavior data from eds and discussing school based issues instead of some sample school was beneficial.
- ✓ More specific advice. (e.g., what EXACTLY should we be looking at for school wide data to determine success at 80%)
- ✓ I suggest to remove any sample or test school data to make each application of a new tool/function as practical as possible. All data we review should be for our school only, please.

Representation

Comments suggested that it may be difficult for all members of the team to meet a centralized location.

- ✓ We need to build capacity of understanding of the PS/RtI process at our school. The curriculum coaches haven't been able to attend these workshops. The information presented would be very useful for them!
- ✓ There are many teachers back at school who help us with SBLT. It did not feel like the right people were at the meetings. Yes, I am the one who did the inviting...but I cannot cover for those people who had to stay back at school.
- ✓ Not all SBLT members are at the trainings thus we were not able to collaborate. Of the 3 members present, we did have time to brainstorm some ideas that need to be brought back to the school.
- ✓ Just wish there was a way to bring the whole team.

Individualized Training

The prior topics; Group Planning Time, Levels, School-Based Data, and Representation, are part of a larger theme, which was the need for individualized training that would allow the SBLT to meet together to solve problems at their own level of implementation, using their own data, with the assistance of district level trainers.

One of the three questions asked in this survey was whether, “The SBLT training provided skills for implementation of PS/RtI at the school level”. This is the ultimate goal of the trainings. Many comments suggested that continued efforts to provide individualized training and support can promote achievement of this goal.

- ✓ Too many sit and get meeting, need to do trainings at school or look at school RtI process by coming in and then evaluating/analyzing RtI
- ✓ Sometimes I feel as if there is not a great deal of direction in how to truly implement the information at the school level.
- ✓ Continued visits by the district would be supportive. We can get instant feedback and our questions and concerns can be voiced directly to district personnel. Having a full staff of support personnel at the beginning of the year would be helpful as well. We have been getting extra personnel in dribbles all year, with two more expected within the next month. While this is great and we welcome the support, it is coming a little too late to help us really impact the progress of some of our Tier 2 and 3 students.
- ✓ I'm thinking it could possibly be beneficial if a trainer came to our schools to work with our full SBLT teams to assist with determining and creating a strategic plan to help teams move in a positive direction. Often times an outsider looking in is able to provide some very valuable insights and suggestions.
- ✓ It would be helpful to have someone from the district or state actually work with the SBLT to process the information.
- ✓ More individualized assistance.
- ✓ More direct practice and application rather than ps/rti theory.
- ✓ We need people who can come out to the schools and support us in the process of RtI
- ✓ Schools need to be able to bring real school problems or ideas to share and have Team work time to develop what the school actually needs.
- ✓ Perhaps a site visit from a coach, to assist with some problem solving, etc.
- ✓ I think the time to sit and collaborate, with guidance from the RtI trainers, is a valuable experience for us as a school team.

Follow-Up

Several comments suggested a need for district level personnel to follow-up with schools concerning plans made during training sessions. Comments above suggested that individualized training would be an effective means of making specific plans for school-based implementation. Plans made during sessions can be noted and then follow-up can examine progress toward goals and problem solve any difficulties encountered.

- ✓ We would like to have a contact person who we can call and get a definitive answer to our questions. Everyone we talk to has a different interpretation of RTI requirements. We begin a

process and then are told, no that's not right, do it this way. We change the process only to be told later by someone else that the original process was the correct one. Please get everybody (ESE, RTI) on the same page. Right now they are not even in the same book.

- ✓ Someone needs to be checking in with the schools to determine if the plans made in the meetings have been implemented.
- ✓ more accountability for schools...there is a lot of time and resources being spent on Rtl training - would like to know - what the check and balances are in place to make sure the schools are actually utilizing the information they are receiving
- ✓ At the training great skills are given and planned out to meet the needs of our school. But after the training day, follow-up is inconsistent and plans are not always supported or followed.
- ✓ We don't have a process for bringing the information back to our whole team.
- ✓ Making sure of implementation and confirming schools buy in and development.
- ✓ People to do the work. Also I fully support the RTI process and feel it is working but we need to give some consideration that the implementation in reality is very different then the good idea on paper. Specifically, how do we get the implementation down we seem to have breakdowns in getting down with fidelity and integrity what is to be done

PS/Rtl Coaches

Comments suggested that the presence of an onsite PS/Rtl Coach or facilitator would be helpful to problem solve difficulties encountered, make plans, and monitor implementation. Part of the individualized training process should examine whether each school has the personnel necessary to meet the needs of their plan.

- ✓ I feel having a person full time at our school to help with this process would be very helpful. Our guidance counselor has been pulled in many different directions and has worn many different hats to get our Rtl process off the ground. She/We need help!
- ✓ more support for the implementation and maintenance of PBIPs, FBAs, PSWs...even just 5% (assuming that Tier 3 is no more than 5%) is an unsustainable number of plans to execute with fidelity.
- ✓ would like training on how to use Title 1 personnel more effectively at the middle school level like they have learned to do in the elementary schools. There are a lot of kids who are Level 1 and need intensive remediation but not even sure how to make a difference.
- ✓ Forms, templates, resources, follow-up with Rtl Coach
- ✓ An RTI Coach/Facilitator
- ✓ The training sets forth expectations that schools do not have the resources to implement. Don't just tell us what to do. We need to know how to do it with the very limited resources of a non-Title One school.

Tools

Comments suggested that concrete tools that can be implemented directly at the school level may be a key component of successful implementation. Each school must know what a successful PS/RtI framework looks like and then must be able to articulate how that will look at their school. The individualized training must then articulate how that framework is established and maintained at each school.

- ✓ A sample of model programs from beginning to end all three tiers of RTI demonstrated as ways of implementation
- ✓ General/Simplified overview of "how to", more examples, more ready to use materials to take back to schools.
- ✓ Flowchart for teachers from tier to tier
- ✓ More EXPLICIT ways of work; very clear cut precision statements (not just theoretical, but actual, real-world) regarding HOW to implement PS/RTI
- ✓ Better data management systems. Need a method of tracking when teachers call for behavior support that is not severe enough to warrant an ODR. Something like a "classroom incident report" would provide data to better measure Tier 1 effectiveness.
- ✓ List of Tier II interventions.
- ✓ additional support on graphing would be VERY helpful. It seems that we discuss the same things over and over but do not discuss areas of the actual implementation of the interventions. Ex: graphing, frequency charts, etc. I think this is an area that needs a lot more attention.
- ✓ These trainings are not seen as productive by the team we bring. Each training fewer and fewer staff are willing to attend. Also, our educational diagnostician and social worker always seem to be with their 'other' schools and unable to attend with us. We could really use more sharing of how schools are actually doing this; can the pilot schools share what they do? Why are we all having to reinvent the process completely? We need help we can use, not 'in a perfect world this is how RTI would look' trainings.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Many of the topics addressed in the comments that were submitted are likely evident to those working hard at the district level to assist schools in the development of their PS/Rtl framework. Trainings were designed to allow for individual planning time and use of individual school data. Trainings were also designed to assist schools at different levels of implementation. Examples of successful practices and specific 'hands-on' tools were likely also provided during sessions. The overall positive quantitative ratings indicate a recognition that trainings were helpful to those who participated.

The goal of this evaluation is to suggest possible means through which training can be improved to better assist development of the PS/Rtl framework at each school. Many of the comments highlighted the importance of individualized training designed to directly affect the specific processes at each school. Site-based SBLT training may be most helpful, as this may allow all SBLT members to attend and provide ready access to all necessary data. Feedback highlighted the importance of clarifying specific explicit ways that each school can meet the data and intervention needs of each tier of the PS/Rtl framework. Trainers could then work through these decision points with each school and note decisions that are made. Trainers could then follow-up at a later time to determine the degree to which plans made were implemented at each school. Special attention could focus on the degree to which personnel and resources at each school are sufficient to meet the needs of the framework that is developed.

A goal of the PS/Rtl framework is for district level trainers to meet with school level personnel twice yearly to monitor development and implementation. Results from the Fall 2010 administration of the Self-Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI) indicated that achievement of this goal was still in progress. We will be able to assess further progress toward this goal when Spring 2011 data are available. After review of these data, leadership can assess the best means of assuring that each school obtains the individualized assistance necessary to implement the PS/Rtl framework.

Table 4: The School-Based Leadership Team meets at least twice each year with the District Leadership Team to review data and implementation issues.					
	Not Started	In Progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Total
N	55	36	18	8	117
%	47.0%	30.8%	15.4%	6.8%	