

The Manhattan/Staten Island Bilingual Educational  
Technical Assistance Center at Hunter College

## Improving Outcomes for All English Language Learners

### Best Practices for Assessment & Progress Monitoring

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New York City Department of Education

## RSE - TASC

- › The Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center provides technical assistance and professional development throughout New York City to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- › Coordinator: Loren Bohlen, [Lbohlen@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:Lbohlen@schools.nyc.gov)
- › We provide regional (open to all) support in the areas of
  - Special Education Instruction
  - Transition Practices
  - Behavior (PBIS)
  - Non-district State Approved Schools
  - Bilingual Specialists:
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## Best Practices for Assessment & Progress Monitoring

### The Big Ideas:

- English Language Learners are assessed in many ways. Let's define and discuss what all this assessment means.
- Let's explore what practitioners need to consider about the assessment of ELLs.
- Let's see if Response to Intervention has promising potential for achievement of ELLs.

## Defining Assessment...

- › The act of making a judgment about something;
- › The act of evaluating or appraising something.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

For the purposes of Education,  
it is about documenting knowledge and skills  
in measurable terms  
and  
it often serves a purpose in  
accountability reporting.

## Vocabulary Preview

Screenings or Pre-tests:  
 Formative Assessment:  
 Summative Assessment:  
 Criterion-Referenced:  
 Norm-Referenced:  
 Reliability:  
 Validity:  
 Progress Monitoring:  
 Performance Based Assessment:  
 Curriculum Based Assessment:  
 Accommodations:

## Now we're cooking!

A Chef is asked to cook for an event...

- What should the chef do before choosing a recipe?
- How does the chef know if it is turning out ok?
- Did the guests like the dish?
- Did the chef follow the recipe exactly?
- How does this chef compare to other Top Chefs?
- Can anyone follow the recipe and get the same dish?
- What if you don't have one of the ingredients?
- A Guest has a special diet restriction, can the recipe be adjusted?

## No Child Left Behind & ELLs

What are the benefits and challenges with including ELLs in High Stakes Testing?

Good News...

Bad News...

## NYSESLAT and High Stakes Tests

- › Demystify test questions
- › Deconstruct the test parts
- › Model Test-Taking Strategies
- › Confer with students to find out why chose answers and reteach as needed
- › Have students find support for their answers in the text
- › Develop a list of test specific vocabulary
- › Track performance so you can identify where you need to focus instruction
- › Gradually increase silent work time to build test stamina
- › Model how to eliminate test "distracters" (non-essential details)
- › Analyze answers with scoring rubrics to know what gets points

### **Accommodations for ELLs**

Time Extension  
Separate Location  
Third Reading of Listening Selection  
Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries  
Simultaneous Use of English and Alternative Language Editions  
Oral Translation for Lower-Incidence Languages  
Writing Responses in the Native Language

### **Performance Based Assessments**

Constructed-Response formats, rather than Selected-Response, so students develop a response, create a product or conduct a demonstration...

How can Performance Based Assessments be useful in supporting and promoting learning for ELLs?

### **What if we can...?**

- ▶ Prevent small learning problems from becoming big ones
- ▶ Close the achievement gap for all students (ELLs & SWDs)
- ▶ Be confident in the evidence we use in decision-making

### **The Promise of Response to Intervention for English Language Learners**

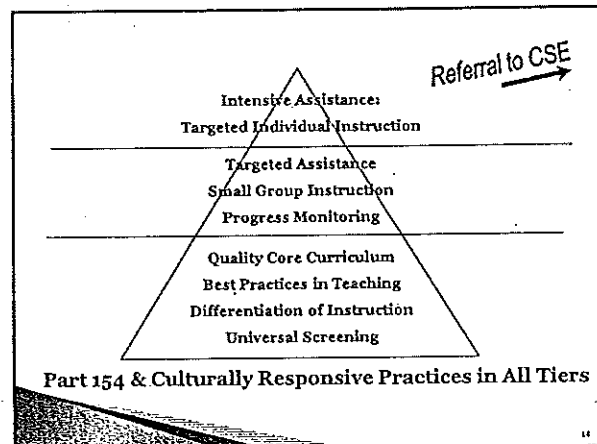
**2012...**

Did the Mayan's know that the End of the Discrepancy method for identifying a Learning Disability was near?

### Coming Soon To a School Near You: Response to Intervention

- Educational resources are organized in a school-wide, systemic, multi-tier service delivery model.
- All students have access to a quality core curriculum and evidence-based instruction.
- Struggling students are identified early through a Universal Screening process and are given targeted additional instruction (intervention)
- Progress Monitoring examines the student's Response to the Intervention and guides next-step decisions.

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### Considerations for RtI with ELLs

#### Ensuring ACCESS to the curriculum

- › Culturally responsive practices (value diversity)
- › Linguistically appropriate practices (use strategies)
- › Academically challenging curriculum & rigorous instructional practices (DI)
- › ESL/Bilingual services are an integral part of Tier 1
- › Provide Accommodations! (Part 154)
- › Collaborate with multidisciplinary "experts"
- › Make decisions based on the data from your ongoing progress monitoring

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### Consider this...

- › What is the problem with the discrepancy method of identifying a learning disability?
- › How does RtI differ from the current referral model?
- › How does RtI differ from AIS?
- › How are the various forms of assessment useful for RtI?

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## Keys to Good Decision-Making: Progress Monitoring

- Ongoing, Consistent and Frequent PM that includes systematic data interpretation and teacher action is central to good decision-making in the RtI model.
- Performance comparisons (trends and rate of growth) are made to both the student's progress toward the goal and the students progress compared with the whole group's progress.

## Why Monitor Progress (besides the law)?

- › Progress monitoring is frequent and ongoing providing data in measurable terms
- › Progress or lack of progress should inform instructional decisions and be addressed prior to referral or annual goals
- › How will you report progress if you don't measure it?
- › Federal and NY State law require periodic reports to the parent of student progress toward annual goals
- › Stating that student is "progressing" is Not Enough!
  - *Student is making sufficient progress in December to meet goal in June as demonstrated by orally reading 80 words per minute with 4 errors maximum.*
  - Reporting student progress and demonstrating progress with a visual representation makes it transparent and easy for all to understand

## Let's Compare:

### Traditional Assessments :

- Lengthy
- Administered on an infrequent basis
- Doesn't provide immediate feedback
- Feedback may not inform instruction

### Progress Monitoring:

- Instructional Probes
- Brief and Frequent
- Immediate feedback to inform instruction/IEP
- Based on your curriculum

Pamela M. Stecker, Clemson University and Michelle Hosp, University of Utah

## Curriculum Based Measurement

Stanley Deno - University of Minnesota (late 70's):

Created a reliable and valid system to measure student progress and out of those studies came: Curriculum Based Measurement

- A type of Progress Monitoring (Formative)
- Measurement materials are aligned with the curriculum
- A reliable and valid way to measure student progress and growth.
- Provides assessment information to make instructional decisions.
- Measurement is frequent
- Instruments used are generic tests (probes that are highly prescriptive and standardized) designed to mirror the curricula
- Research shows (Fuchs, Vanderbilt U.) that when teachers use CBM for instructional decision-making: students learn more, teacher decision-making improves and students are more aware of their performance.

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## How to Monitor Progress

- Use the identified evaluation procedure
- Follow the evaluation schedule
- Establish a baseline and a goal
- Track the data
- Identify the skills needed to master the content of the curriculum

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## Progress Monitoring Tools: Graphing 101

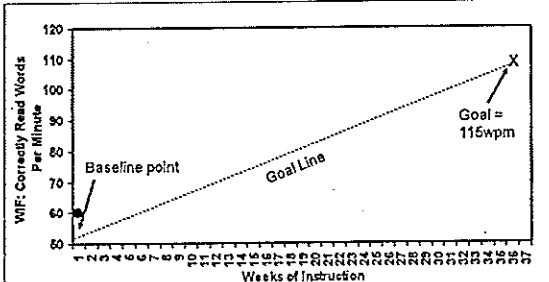
"Too many numbers, just tell me what it means!"

▶ Line goes up = Good

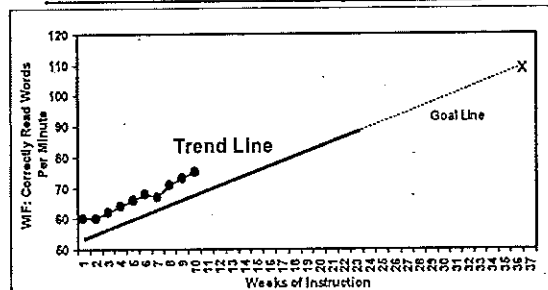
▶ Line goes down = Bad

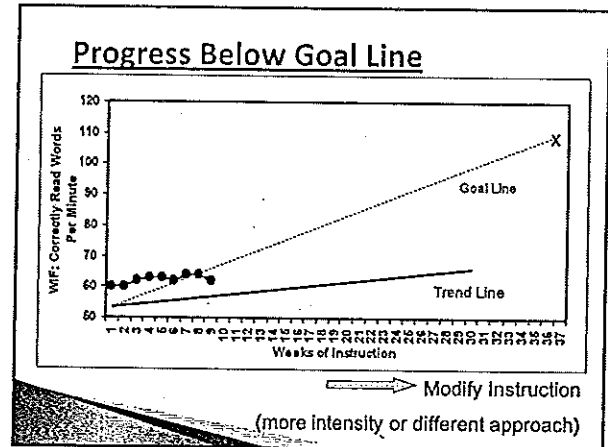
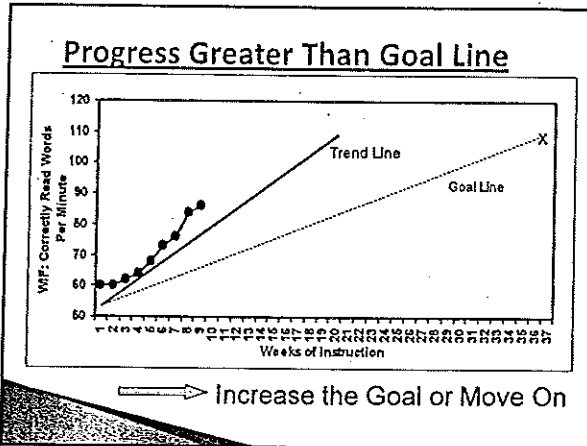
## Progress Monitoring Informs Instruction

### -Establish a Goal Line



## Trend Line Shows Progress at Goal Line

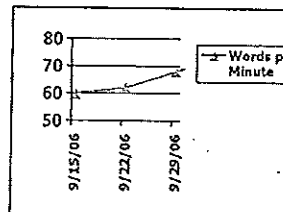




## Monitoring → Reporting

- Progress must be reported to parents
- Base report on data collected
- Statements such as "student is doing well" or "is making progress" are subjective and open to interpretation
- Data charts or graphs can be shared to provide a clear visual representation of progress

### Reporting Progress Example:



Date	Words Per Minute
9/15/06	60
9/22/06	62
9/29/06	68

#### Comments

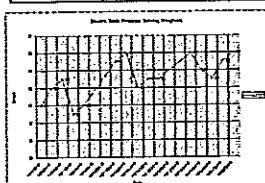
- Mike's oral reading has increased from 60 to 68 correct words per minute
- If Mike maintains this rate of progress he will reach his goal target by June

### Reporting Progress Example:

#### Comments

- Dawn's scores varied from day to day, but not greatly
- The overall trend shows increased improvement over time
- If Dawn maintains this rate of progress, she is very likely meet her annual goal of 90% on 8/10 assessments/worksheets

DATE	SCORE
baseline	59, 60, 60, 61, 60
4-Oct	60
5-Oct	62
6-Oct	63
7-Oct	59
Etc....	



### Data Dos and Don'ts

- › Do improve data reliability by:
  - Clearly stating evaluation conditions, procedure and schedule
  - Training staff responsible for data collection
- › Do make sure data collection frequency makes sense for the target skill so that data can inform instruction
- › Don't draw conclusions based on too few data points
- › Don't wait too long to make an instructional change if there is no progress "Weeks, not months." Jim Wright
- › Do keep parents informed!

### Progress Monitoring Tools:

#### AIMSweb: K-8

- Probes for Reading, LA, Math, and Early Literacy
- Use of online data management, training for staff
- Palm links (DIBELS compatible)

#### Intervention Central: Jim Wright

- Many probes and charts for progress monitoring
- FREE website with loads of resources

#### DIBELS: reading only (University of Oregon)

#### Wireless Generation

- mClass, Reading 3-D, STEEP, Scholastic, STAR, CBM-R

### Assessment that Promotes Learning

- › Share results with students so that you are not just auditing learning, but using data to enable students to hit the learning target
- › Identifies strengths and needs so YOU know where to focus YOUR energy on re-teaching
- › Provides specific feedback during individual student conferences where you share assessment results and learning goals
- › Compares student performance to standards
- › Give students descriptive and productive feedback and feed-forward (next steps)

- When an ELL becomes the focus of concern, the instructional program itself must be examined to determine the match between the demands of the curriculum and the student's current proficiency in the language of instruction.
  - It is important to examine the achievement of the student's "true peers" (students with similar language proficiencies, cultural and experiential backgrounds) to see if they are excelling or not...

### What about Students with Disabilities?

- Four challenges that contribute to disproportionate identification of special education learning needs:
  - Professional's knowledge of second language development and disabilities
  - Instructional practices
  - Intervention strategies
  - Assessment tools

*Processes and challenges in identifying learning disabilities among students who are English language learners in three New York State districts, REL 2010-No. 085.*

### Why is the screening and identification of limited English proficiency an issue?

- Students with disabilities mistakenly identified as limited English proficient (LEP) because of their disability.
- Students who are not disabled are mistakenly identified as having a disability due to the process of acquiring proficiency in English

Students with disabilities who are speakers of languages other than English are unable to exit or receive inadequate ESL instruction

### Indicators of Language Difference

- It is not unusual for ELLs/CLD students to demonstrate a lower level of English proficiency than their monolingual peers for an extended period of time
- Second language acquisition follows a developmental course similar to first language acquisition
- Language loss is a normal phenomenon when opportunities to hear and use L1 are minimized so the student may appear limited in L1 and L2
- Shifting from one language to another within utterances is not an indicator of language confusion (code switching)
- It is not unusual for second language acquirers to experience dysfluencies associated with lack of vocabulary, word finding difficulties and/or anxiety

### Indicators of Learning Disability

- Difficulty in learning language at a normal rate compared to learners from similar backgrounds, even with special assistance in both languages
- Short length of utterances in both languages with lack of growth
- Auditory processing problems (e.g. poor memory, poor comprehension)
- Poor sequencing skills (communication is disorganized, incoherent and leaves listener confused in the native language)
- Communication difficulties when interacting with peers from a similar background
- Lack of organization, structure and sequence in spoken and written language; difficulty conveying thoughts

### Difference vs. Disability

- ▶ Learning or behavior problems may be due to...
  - a different sociolinguistic or cultural background,
  - manifestation of their adjustment to a new socio-cultural environment with different behavioral expectations
  - different learning styles or preferences,
  - the presence of a disability,
- or a combination of these factors and these behaviors may appear similar among ELLs and SWDs.

### Developing an Effective Assessment Process for Diverse students

- ▶ Refer only after intensive interventions have been tried, documented and reviewed
- ▶ Evaluations must comply with Part 200 regs (bilingual assessments, the use of interpreters, multiple sources of evidence)
- ▶ Evaluations must be culturally and linguistically responsive (review test instruments for bias, review test manual for accommodations for administration with diverse students, document how you have accounted for diversity regarding procedures, test selection)

### Compile a Student "Dossier" From Many Sources

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Student's Age  | • Transience / Mobility   |
| • Current cultural home setting                                  | • Medical History   |
| • Time spent in United States                                    | • Age at which disability occurred  |
| • Social maturity  | • Type/degree of disability   |
| • Level of language proficiency in English and other language    | • Presence of multiple handicaps  |
| • Amount / type of language input received in the home/community | • Level of language involvement related to the disability                             |
| • Speech and language abilities in both languages                | • Level of academic achievement   |
| • Success in past and present placements                         | • Measured intellectual ability   |
| • Wishes of students and parents                                 | • Method and language used in measuring academic achievement and intellectual ability |
|  | • Level of adaptive behavior  |
|  | • Strengths, Experiences and Motivations  |

### Create a Learning Profile

- › Include a variety of authentic & diagnostic tests valid for use with diverse learners (in L1 & L2)
  - Cross cultural observations
  - Family/home Interview
  - Work Sample / Language Sample analysis
  - Ongoing, authentic progress monitoring
  - Valid & Reliable Achievement testing Instruments
- › Is student exhibiting atypical behavior?
- › To whom is student being compared?
- › What data should be focus of comparison? (scores, age at entry, time and type of services obtained)

### The Need for Quality Assessments Guidelines for Practitioners...

- › Must be mindful of the screening process (Part 117, HLO) and the Implications of those results (Part 154 regulations- provision of services to LEPs and Part 200 procedures, ex-bilingual evals)
- › Must respect the complexity of the process that needs to take into consideration multiple factors
- › Must recognize the limitations of assessment tools
- › Must be willing to reflect and acknowledge personal biases that may influence decisions (ex: transition planning)
- › Must understand that learning disabilities are generally due to factors intrinsic to the learner while second language acquisition difficulties are typically due to extrinsic factors

### Four A's

- › Read the article to yourself.
- › Complete a Four A's activity with your partner.
- › Be prepared to share with the group:
  - AUTHOR's Purpose
  - Something you AGREE with that the author said
  - Something you would ARGUE with that the author said
  - What ACTION will you take based on what you read

### Final thoughts...

There is no such thing as a non-biased test.

Assessment is more than testing.

Measure progress, not achievement.

Prevention is better than failure.

~Catherine Collier

We're going to need some help...

### Resources:



#### On the World Wide Web

- [www.rti4success.org](http://www.rti4success.org)
- [www.nysrti.org](http://www.nysrti.org)
- [rtinetwork.org](http://rtinetwork.org)
- [www.studentprogress.org](http://www.studentprogress.org)
- [www.progressmonitoring.org](http://www.progressmonitoring.org)
- [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)
- For Information on using Title I, Title III, IDEA and ARRA funds...  
[www2.ed.gov/programs/titelparta/rti.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titelparta/rti.html)

#### Books:

- *Why do English Language Learners Struggle with Reading? Distinguishing Language Acquisition from Learning Disabilities* (Klinger, Hoover, Baca)
- *Enhancing RTI* (Fisher & Frey)
- *Classroom Instruction that Works with ELLs* (Hill & Bjork)
- *Making Content Comprehensible: The SIOP Model* (Echavaria & Vogt)

Thank you for your attention today.  
Please complete an evaluation form,  
we value your feedback.

If you have any questions or want more information, please  
contact your RSE-TASC Bilingual Specialist:

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