

The Response to Intervention approach is different from Special Education services. All students at risk of failing receive RtI, whereas only a small percentage of students receive Special Ed services. RtI is an approach that ensures students receive the help they need as soon as possible. Students do not have to qualify for Special Ed services in order to get extra help. When a student needs more help than he is getting in the regular classroom, he is moved to Tier 2 or 3 of RtI. At that level, he will get more instruction on top of what he receives in class. If a student still struggles even after getting a lot of extra help, the school may decide that he should be tested to see if he qualifies for Special Education services.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long should a student receive RtI supports before being evaluated for Special Education eligibility?

There is no set amount of time. This should be based on the individual student's progress. A student cannot be denied a Special Education evaluation just because he or she is receiving RtI services, however.

Who can request that a student be evaluated for Special Ed eligibility?

Anyone who works with a child can request an evaluation: parents, teachers, therapists, etc. No matter who makes the request, parents or guardians must give written consent in order for the evaluations to be done. Once the parent/guardian signs the consent form, the school has 60 school days in which to complete and score the evaluations and present the results to the parents.

The school can deny the request, but if they do, they must do so in writing within 14 school days. They must also justify their reasons for refusing.

Does a student have to receive RtI before getting Special Ed services?

There are many categories of eligibility for special education services. Data collected during the RtI process is **only** required when a student is being evaluated for eligibility under 'Specific Learning Disability'. If RtI supports were not in place before the request for an evaluation was made, supports need to be put in place for the student during the time span allowed for the evaluation process (which is 60 school days) so that the results can be factored into the eligibility determination.

Screenings vs. Evaluations

Screenings

Some screenings are done for all students, and because of that, are often referred to as "universal screenings". The purpose of these screenings is to determine which students are at risk of falling behind academically, or which ones are struggling with their behavior. Assessments will also be given routinely to students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 RtI supports to monitor progress.

Evaluations

Evaluations are more in-depth than assessments and require signed parental consent before they are conducted. Students who have received Tier 2 or Tier 3 RtI supports will be referred for a special education evaluation if progress monitoring shows that, despite intense supports, the student is not making adequate progress.

RtI for Students Receiving Special Education Services

RtI is an approach for **any** student. Schools monitor the response of all students to interventions, including students who receive special education services. That data is used to make decisions about whether supports need to be changed or increased.



Family Matters is one of the Illinois Parent Training and Information Centers. Our mission is to build upon families' strengths, to empower parents and professionals to achieve the strongest possible outcomes for students with disabilities, and to enhance the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities. For more information, contact Family Matters at 866-436-7842 or on our website: <http://www.fmptc.org>. Stop in and visit us at 1901 S. 4th Street, Suite 209, Effingham, Illinois.

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