

Rtl-: A few things we forgot to tell

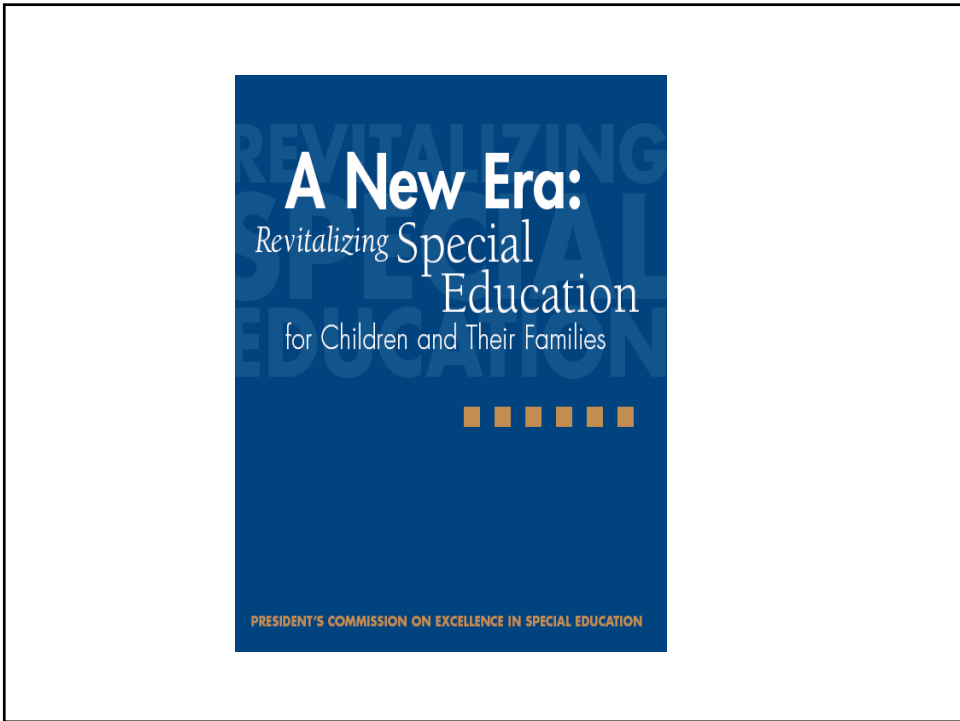
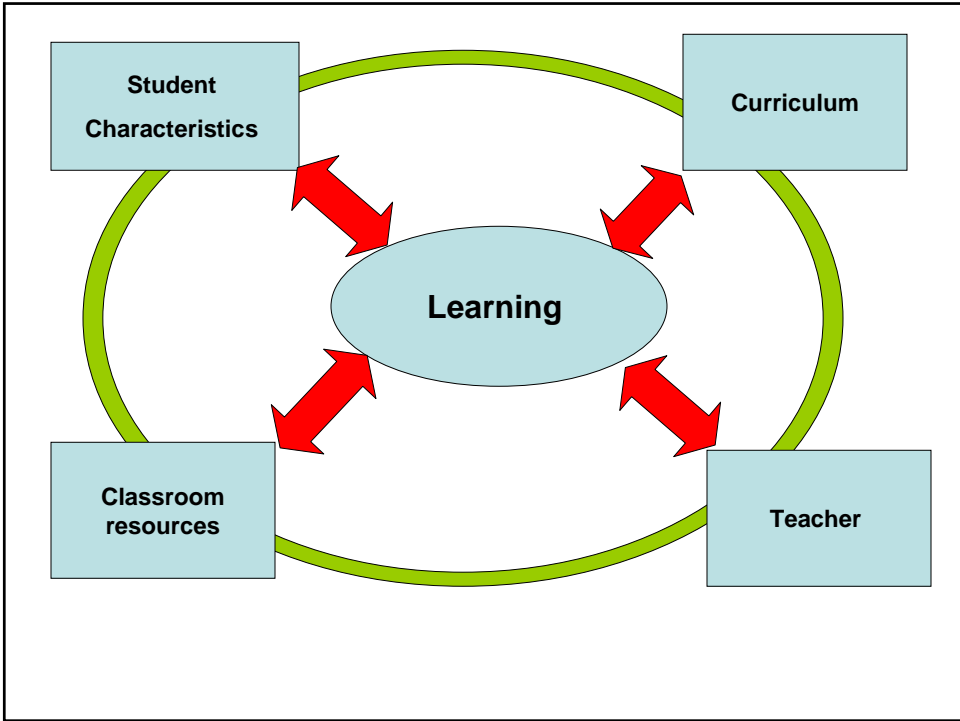
Rtl-: Monitoring (& financing) NCLB with IDEA

Rtl-: Removing “Special” from Special Education

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Learning Disabilities

LD has been controversial, characterized more by disagreement than agreement. As a field we have argued over **conceptualization and definition**, over **methods and measures for identifying** individuals as LD, over the appropriateness and efficacy of **treatments or interventions**, even over whether there really is such a condition as LD. Many of these issues have now been resolved. The next step is to include the translations of these insights into policies that lead to effective instructional programs in schools. (Keogh, 2002).



Young people with disabilities drop out of high school at **twice the rate** of their peers.

Enrollment rates of students with disabilities in higher education are still **50 percent lower** than enrollment among the general population.

Most public school educators do **not feel well prepared** to work with children with disabilities. In 1998, only 21 percent of public school teachers said they felt very well prepared to address the needs of students with disabilities, and another 41 percent said they felt moderately well prepared.

Of the six million children in special education, almost half of those are identified as having a “specific learning disability.” In fact, this group has grown more than **300 percent since 1976**.

Of those with “specific learning disabilities,” 80 percent are there simply because they **haven’t learned how to read**. Thus, many children receiving special education—up to 40 percent—are there because they weren’t taught to read. The reading difficulties may not be their only area of difficulty, but it is the area that resulted in special education placement. Sadly, few children placed in special education close the achievement gap to a point where they can read and learn like their peers.

Children of **minority status** are over-represented in some categories of special education. African-American children are twice as likely as white children to be labeled mentally retarded and placed in special education. They are also more likely to be labeled emotionally disturbed and placed in special education.

2004 Learning Disabilities Roundtable Report

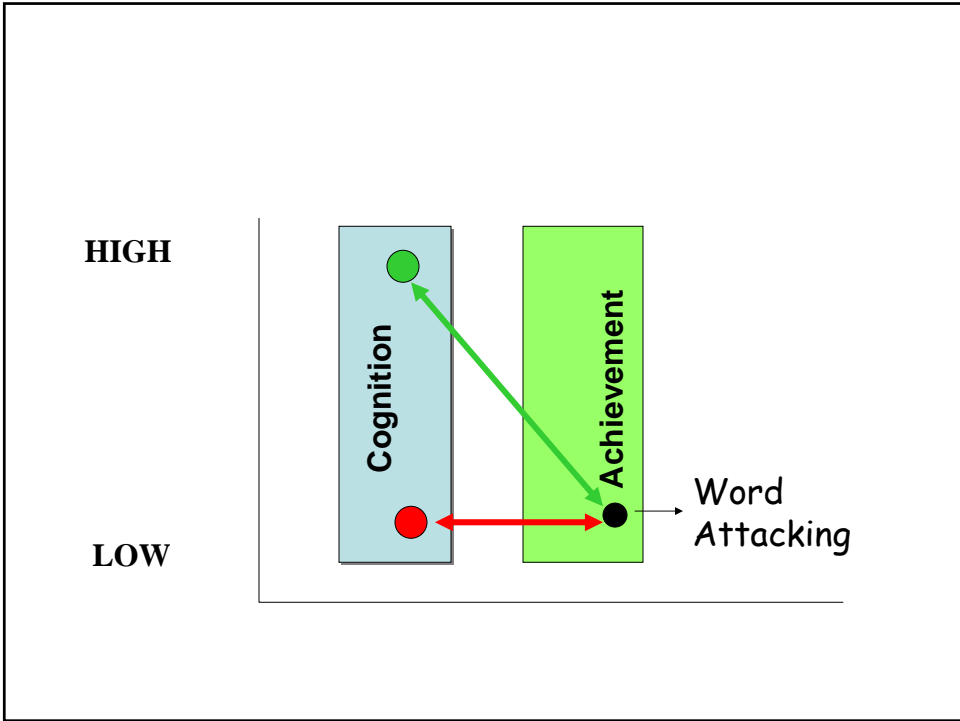
- Concept of SLD is valid supported by strong converging evidence
- SLD are neurologically based and intrinsic to the individual
- Individuals with SLD show intra-individual differences in skills and abilities
- SLD persist across life span, though manifestations and intensity may vary as a function of developmental stage and environmental demands

Definition of LD

- SLD is
 - “... a disorder in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.”

IDEA and Cognitive Assessment

- How do we connect the definition of LD with methods to assess it?
 - Measure “basic psychological processes” using well validated standardized tests built on current views of human cognition.
 - Identify the cognitive processes needed for academic tasks (i.e. reading, math)
 - Identify a cognitive weakness with otherwise average or above levels and use the information to GUIDE your targeted teaching.



“Services first, assessment later.” 23
 —Commissioner Steve Bartlett

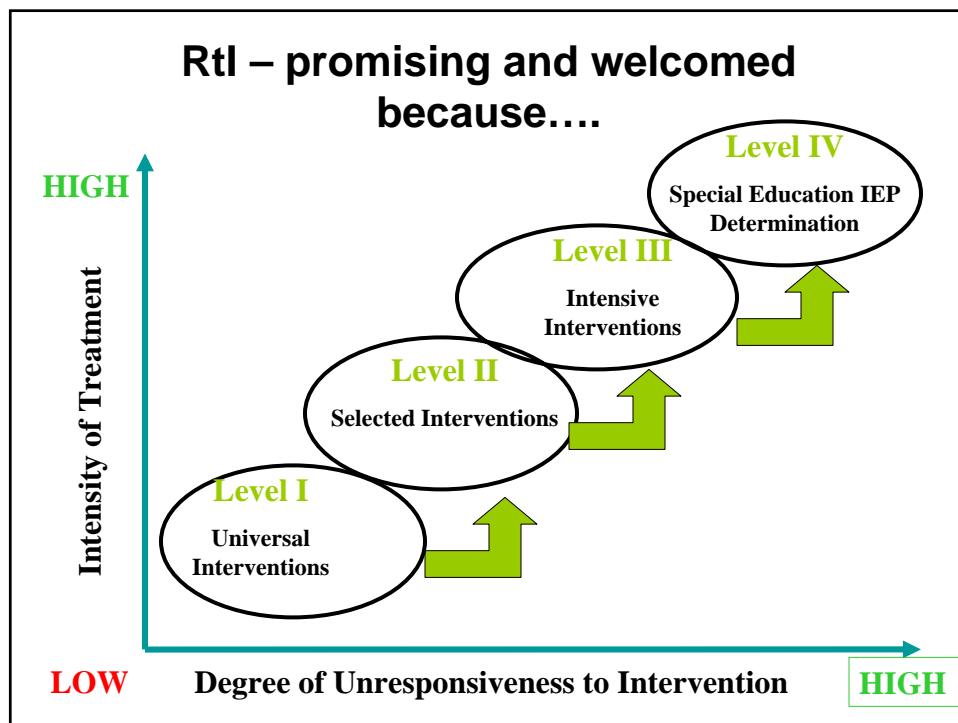
“I would like to encourage this Commission to drive a stake through the heart of this over reliance on the discrepancy model for determining the kinds of children that need services. It doesn't make any sense to me. I've wondered for 25 years why it is that we continue to use it and over rely on it as a way of determining what children are eligible for services in special education.” 25
 —Commissioner Wade Horn

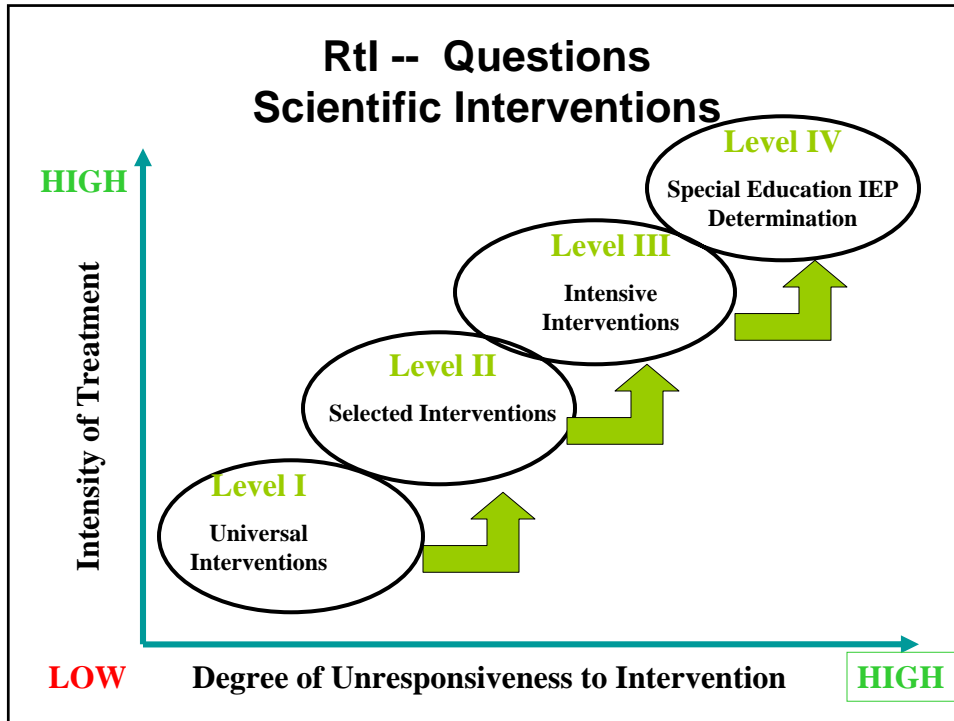
K — 3 — 6 — 9 — 12 — Outcome

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Rtl — A new idea?

- Intervention Assistance Teams
- Pre-referral Intervention Teams
- Child Study Teams





Teacher Treatment Integrity

“Perhaps the most crucial research need within consultation is understanding the conditions that are necessary for interventions to be implemented with integrity. At present very little is known regarding the conditions under which teachers will implement intervention plans with integrity” (Noell, et. al., 1997).

“ The results showed that teachers maintained adequate treatment integrity for two to four days, after which, implementation began to deteriorate” (Noell, et. al., 1997).

Noel, et. al. (1997). Increasing teacher intervention implementation in general education settings through consultation and performance feedback. *School Psychology Quarterly*, vol 12, no 1, 77-88.

Are there adequately trained personnel to implement a response to instruction model?

- **A very large number of adequately trained personnel will be needed.**
 - Implement a standard teaching protocol
 - Conduct research based problem solving models
 - Learn to conduct CBM of student learning
 - Identify appropriate materials for CBM
- **A paradigm shift will be required for**
 - School psychologists
 - School principals
- **Did we tell them the truth?**

Scientific or “Political” Messages?

Finding 3: Children placed in special education are general education children first.

Despite this basic fact, educators and policy-makers think about the two systems as separate and **tally the cost** of special education as a separate program, not as additional services with resultant add-on **expense**.

In such a system, children with disabilities are often treated not as children who are general education students and whose special instructional needs can be met with scientifically based approaches; they are considered separately with unique **costs**—creating incentives for misidentification and academic isolation—preventing the pooling of all available resources to aid learning.

General education and special education share responsibilities for children with disabilities. **They are not separable at any level—cost, instruction or even identification.**

NCLB & IDEA

Reforming Regular Education through Special Education

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“Special education is in need of fundamental reform. We need to align the IDEA with those progressive accountability efforts included in President George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act.”

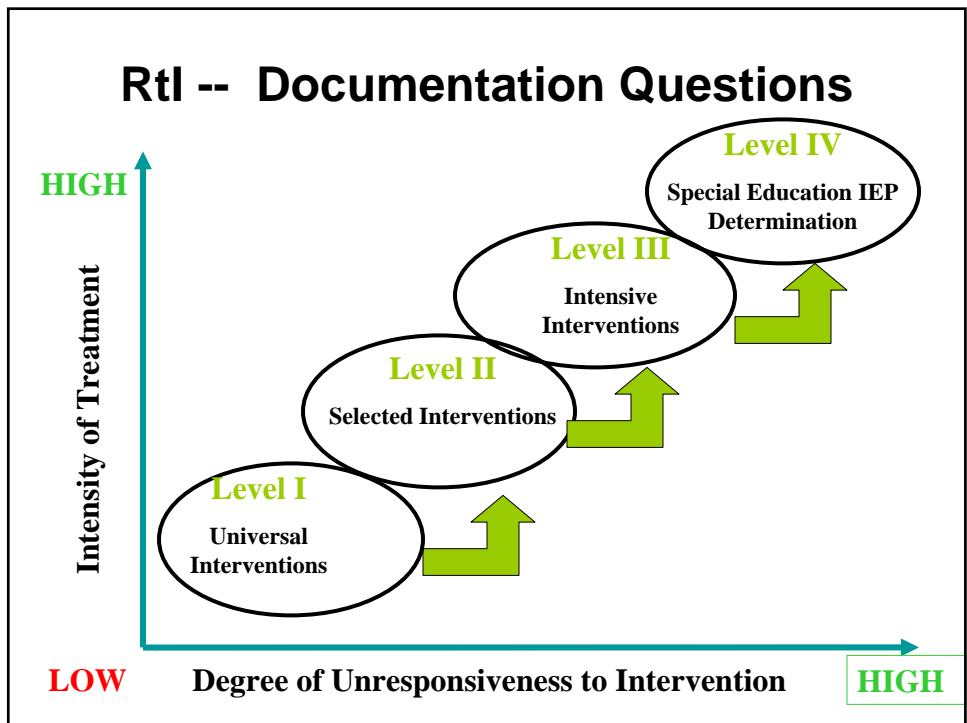
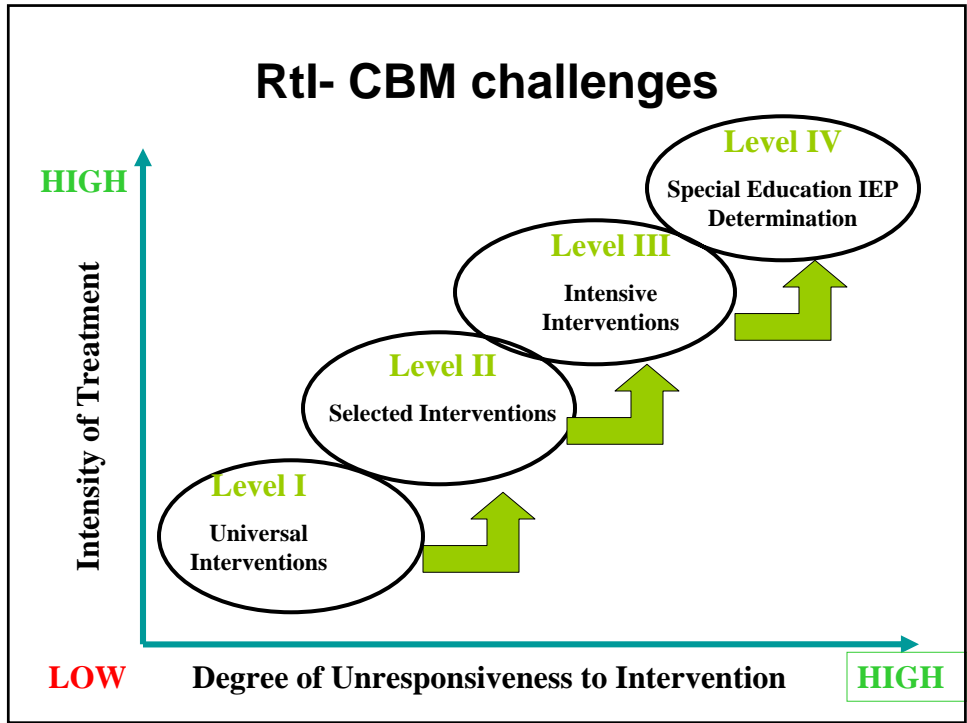
—Commission Chairman Terry E. Branstad

Scaling up Rtl?

- “to date, response-to-instruction models of LD identification have been implemented only on a small scale, using highly trained personnel in research settings. Large scale implementation, which is yet to be tested, requires the specification and implementation of an ambitious professional development agenda” (Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003).

“There is no compelling reason to continue to use IQ tests in the identification of learning disabilities. And, if we eliminated IQ tests from the identification of individuals with learning disabilities, we could shift our focus on to making sure that individuals are getting the services that they need and away from the energy that’s going into eligibility determination.”

—Sharon Vaughn, Ph.D.



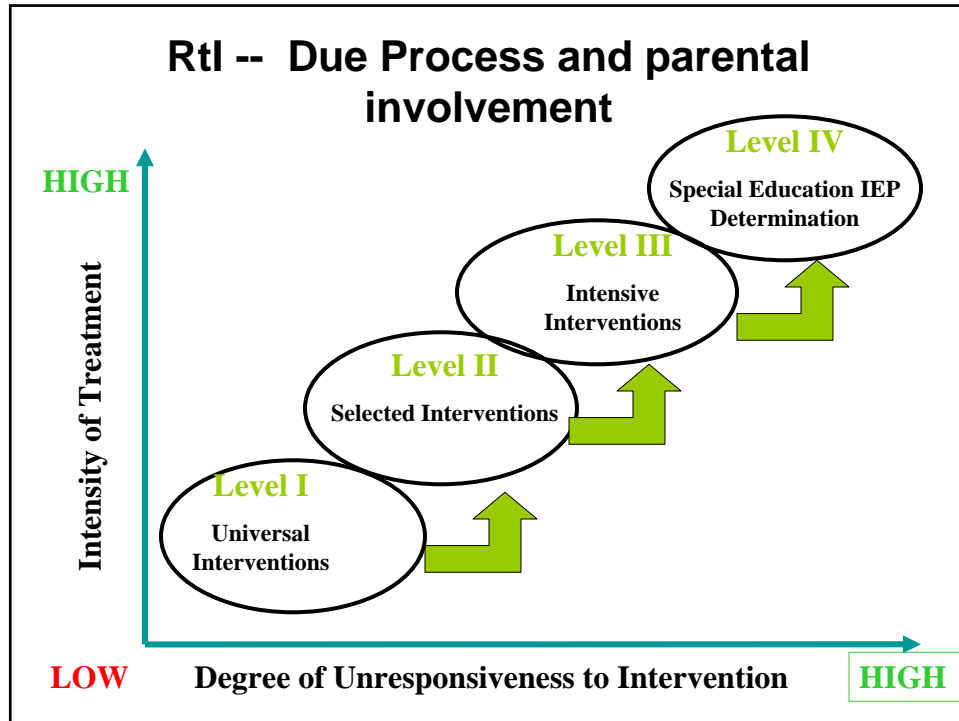
Rtl treatment protocol

- ***Would there be one problem solving protocol across all tiers?***
 - ***Across all grade levels?***
 - ***K-3***
 - ***Across curriculum areas?***
 - ***Education and SLD exist in areas other than reading***

Although it is true that special education has created a base of civil rights and legal protections, children with disabilities remain those most at risk of being left behind. The facts create an urgency for reform that few can deny.

Finding 4: When a child fails to make progress in special education, parents do not have adequate options and recourse. Parents have their child's best interests in mind, but they often do not feel they are empowered when the **system fails them**.

Finding 5: The culture of compliance has often developed from the pressures of litigation, diverting much energy from the public schools' first mission: **educating every child**.



RtI- a few more questions

- At what point do we attempt to separate LD from other conditions?

Preparing school psychologists for Rtl

- Curriculum development and methods courses.
- Single subject research designs
- CBM and data management skills
- Test construction skills (i.e. local norms)