

Consideration of Replacement Core

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Within the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) it is expected that all students participate in an effective, evidence-based core program, delivered with fidelity, and aligned with state standards. Core (Tier 1) instruction is explicit, systematic, scaffolded, and differentiated to support students with varied learning needs. For students who do not attain adequate achievement with core instruction alone, a comprehensive intervention system is available in addition to core instruction. All curricula used for supplemental and intensive interventions as well as for core instruction are based on research or the highest level of evidence available in the content area.

If data indicate that a student is not making adequate progress with core instruction alone, the first consideration is the need for additional support through intervention (Tier 2 or 3). If a student receiving intervention is not making adequate progress towards his or her goal, then the instruction being provided must be intensified. Options for increasing the intensity of instruction within intervention include increasing the number of questions and error corrections the student receives per minute, reducing group size, increasing scaffolding, spending more time modeling, increasing the number of repetition cycles on each skill, and using a more systematic curriculum. If the curriculum has been taught with fidelity and instruction has been intensified, and a student still is not making adequate progress, then customization of the intervention through individual student problem solving occurs.

The Kansas MTSS does not promote the removal of students with disabilities or other learning challenges from classroom core instruction. It is in the core classroom where teachers who are experts in the core content teach state standards and indicators. Within core instruction, students with learning challenges need differentiation of instruction and perhaps other supports, such as co-teaching, curricular adaptations, assistive technology, and other accommodations to enable effective access to the general curriculum. In addition to the core instruction, intervention and other supports are provided to assist in the learning of skills and strategies that can be utilized for learning within the core classroom setting.

While it is expected in a MTSS that students receiving intervention also receive classroom core instruction, there rarely may be a student who needs an alternative comprehensive curriculum as a replacement for the classroom core program. Generally, these students have levels of achievement very different from their peers, as well as instructional and curricular needs that cannot be met in the core classroom setting. It is expected that students with this level of need have received intensified instruction within Tier 3 and that progress monitoring results indicate the need for additional changes in core instruction and intervention. A replacement core curriculum is an evidence-based, comprehensive intervention program that is more intensive, explicit, systematic, and motivating than the core curriculum it is replacing and is taught by a highly knowledgeable teacher with a small group of students (Florida Center for Reading Research). The progress monitoring results from prior interventions should be useful for selecting a comprehensive replacement curriculum that will meet the student's instructional and curricular needs.

For students with disabilities, decisions regarding the type and amount of special education and related services needed, including specialized instruction, supplementary aids and services, and supports for personnel, as well as considerations of a comprehensive replacement core curriculum, are made by the IEP team on an individual basis (34 CFR

300.320(a)(4), KSA 72.987). A comprehensive replacement curriculum is considered only if the student's IEP goals and objectives cannot be met after adapting the core and supplemental curricula or by providing supplementary aids and services (Kansas Special Education Process Handbook, 2008).

It is important to understand the difference between a comprehensive replacement core curriculum and a supplemental instructional program. A comprehensive replacement core provides instruction in all five Big Ideas of reading (National Reading Panel, 2000) or the math curriculum focal points (National Council of Teachers of Math, 2006). The goal of a comprehensive replacement core curriculum is to provide instruction on all standards, benchmarks, and indicators in such a way as to accelerate the student's progress to a level that enables them to successfully return to classroom core instruction. While a comprehensive replacement core curriculum will typically provide instruction in most of the Kansas standards, benchmarks, and indicators, there might be some instances when specific indicators will need to be taught in addition to the comprehensive replacement core curriculum. The goal of supplemental instruction programs is to teach specific portions of the standards, benchmarks, and indicators. Supplemental instructional programs typically do not provide instruction across all of the reading or math standards and benchmarks and therefore do not sufficiently address all of the Kansas general standards. It is difficult for students who are removed from the classroom core instruction and placed only in a supplemental program ever to "close the gap" to a level where they can be successful within classroom core instruction.

References

- Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR). *Frequently asked questions about reading instruction, Q17*. Retrieved December 2, 2010, from <http://www.fcrr.org/Curriculum/curriculumInstructionFAQ2.shtm#17>
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- National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Retrieved June 28, 2009, from National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/report.cfm>