

A Research-Based View of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD): Implementing Change

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD)
A collaboration of Vanderbilt University and the University of Kansas

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Objective

Recognize and commit to a change process that:

1. Includes a planned, organized process
2. Exhibits policy coherence around current initiatives
3. Understands multiple stakeholder values
4. Has measurable outcome(s)
5. Celebrates incremental/monumental progress

Allowing Time for "Reformulation"

- No one can resolve the crisis of reintegration for another.
- When those who implement change shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice if their explanations are not at once accepted, they are expressing contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own.
- If people are denied the chance to process the stages of change, they are not being treated with respect.

Marris (1975)

Understanding the Role of "Sense-Making"

- Successful implementation of complex policies usually necessitates substantial changes in people's thinking.
- Failure in implementing change most often is not lack of capacity or a deliberate attempt to ignore policy.
- Sense-making for people is not a simple decoding of the policy message.
- Comprehension draws on the individual's knowledge base of understandings, beliefs, and attitudes.

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002)

SLD Determination and IDEA Reauthorization (P.L. 108-446)

New language in the law:

"... a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures...."

Sec. 614(b)6B

Implement Change in SEA, LEA, or School

- What change will your school be undertaking to respond to IDEA regulations?
- What will be the reaction(s) to the change?

Organizing Framework for Policy Coherence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general, availability issue • allocation, priority issue • Mandates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required behavior • prescribed remedies • Inducements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • varied reward structures • Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investment in material, intellectual, or human resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transfers authority among individuals and agencies • Hortatory Appeals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • particular goals/actions are considered high priority by authority • Monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematically collect information/data • regularly reviewing • Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible, answerable, demonstrated outcome
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Adapted from McDonnell & Elmore (1987)

Ensure Policy Coherence Across Legislation

Take time to answer and discuss the following:

- What are some of the federal and state policies currently affecting your SLD identification model?
- How well integrated are these policies with the mission of your school?
- Which policies compete with your school's mission?
- Which policies complement or support your school's mission?

Thinking about Resistance to Change

School Practice (Technology & Policy)
Organizational
 • Current practices
 • Change agent

Perceived Role (Theory)
Individual
 • Professional beliefs
 • Context

School Culture (Social System)
Individual
 • Team relationships
 • Team chemistry

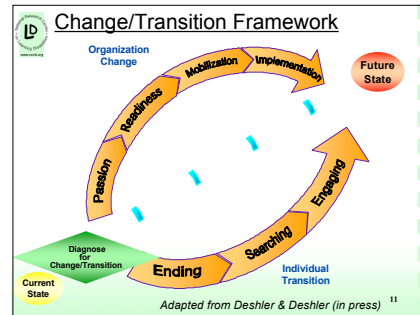
W. Reid (1987)

Preparing School Staff for Change

Take time to address these planning questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?

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Events Change, People Transition

- The issue is not so much "change" as it is "transition"
- To be a positive force, change must involve transition
- Understanding the human side of change is vital
- The process is more about helping people move and grow than altering events

W. Bridges (1993, 2003); B. Ehren (2005)

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Measuring Outcomes

After implementing change(s), measuring the outcome of the effort is important

1. What are the outcomes that will be measured?
2. What are the outcome indicators and influencing factors?
3. How and when will staff systematically collect indicator data?
4. Are the desired outcomes realized?

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NRCLD Can Help Provide Positive Outcomes:
www.NRCLD.org

- Executive Summary of the NRCLD Symposium on Responsiveness to Intervention
- Responsiveness to Intervention in the SLD Determination Process
- RTI Implementation Tool for Reading
- Screening Tool for Well-Described Responsiveness-to-Intervention Models and Comparison Models
- Responsiveness to Intervention: An SLD Determination Resource
- SLD Identification Overview: General Information and Tools to Get Started
- Specific Learning Disabilities and Responsiveness to Intervention Resource List
- A Research-Based View of Specific Learning Disabilities: Implementing Change
- Responsiveness to Intervention in Conjunction with Learning Disability Determination

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Thank you!

Check our website: www.NRCLD.org

IDEAs that Work
U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

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