CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Data-Based Decision-Making Teams and Their Role in Schoolwide Response-to-Intervention Models

This book is about the school teams that exist at the heart of response-to-intervention (RTI) implementation: teams that provide leadership, analyze student performance data, and use data to make decisions impacting individual students, classrooms, and schools. We believe that these teams, particularly grade-level data teams, play a critical role in improving student outcomes. Yet, many schools struggle to establish effective team-based collaboration and data-based decision-making practices within RTI models. These practices are new to many educators and require an investment of resources, such as time and professional development, to develop and fully implement.

You may work for a school district in the early stages of RTI adoption and implementation, in which data-based decision-making teams have not yet been established or fully implemented. If so, this book will provide a roadmap for how to establish and structure your teams for success. Alternately, you may serve as a member of an RTI team in a school district that has been implementing RTI for several years. You may be looking for ways to improve specific aspects of team functioning, such as collaboration or productivity of team meetings. If that is the case, this book will help you examine what is working well for your current team, and explore strategies for improving team functioning.

We believe that an investment in team development during the early stages of RTI implementation can promote buy-in among educators to the broader RTI model and practices and set the stage for productive team meetings for years to come. However, it is never too late to make the investment in the development of team functioning. It is common for RTI teams that have been working together for years to experience challenges that disrupt the process of team-based decision making. For example, teams may experience drift from the original purpose and goals, or face barriers to maintaining a regular meeting schedule. Over time, team members may transition on and off the team, resulting in disruption to the collaborative relationships or col-

lective expertise among team members. In these situations, revisiting some the basics of team development, planning, and collaboration can be a worthwhile investment.

With this book, we aim to provide RTI team members and facilitators with practical strategies to promote effective team-based collaboration and data-based decision making. We offer ideas, resources, and tools for you to use before, during, and after team meetings to improve team functioning. We also provide suggestions and strategies for building consensus and strengthening buy-in among team members for RTI practices, as well as identifying and responding to roadblocks experienced by the team during RTI implementation. Because RTI teams become a permanent addition to a school system, and because teams experience turnover among their membership over time, we also provide ideas and resources to help teams plan for sustainable team collaboration and data-based decision-making practices once they are established.

WHAT IS RTI?

The main focus of this book is on practices for effective team-based decision making within an RTI framework. But before jumping right into a discussion of team-based decision making, we would like to begin with a brief discussion of what we mean when we say "within an RTI framework," because we've observed that educators' use of the term *RTI* varies substantially. The term *RTI* has been used to describe systems-level practices involving prevention of academic difficulties, as well as practices involved in the identification of individual students with specific learning disabilities. As we discuss team-based decision making throughout this book, we are working from a conceptualization of RTI rooted in the following broad definitions.

Shortly after the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) of 2004 was passed, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) published a book outlining RTI policy and implementation considerations. This document provided the following definition of RTI to guide the work of states and school districts:

> Response to Intervention (RtI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions. RtI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention guided by child outcome data. (NASDSE, 2005, p. 3)

More recently, the National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI) released the following definition of RTI based on an analysis of existing research and evidence-based practice:

> Response to intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavioral problems. With RTI, schools use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities. (NCRTI, 2012, p. 2)

Working from these definitions, we conceptualize RTI as a multicomponent framework for the systematic use of data to promote student achievement throughout an entire school. The RTI

framework, or model, consists of a schoolwide, multi-tiered system of academic supports in which high-quality core instruction and universal screening are provided to all students. At-risk and struggling students are identified and provided with interventions matched to their instructional needs. Student progress is monitored, and the effectiveness of interventions is evaluated at the individual student and systems levels. Based on students' RTI, the intensity of instructional supports are increased or decreased as indicated. Throughout the multi-tiered system, including general and special education, data are used to drive decision making and efficiently allocate resources to promote student outcomes. This framework is illustrated by the depiction of the RTI model in Figure 1.1. Data obtained through a school's RTI practices may be used as part of a process to identify students with specific learning disabilities in accordance with IDEIA (2004) and state regulations, and may prove useful in identifying appropriate goals and services for individualized education programs (IEPs); however, the identification of students with specific learning disabilities is not viewed as the primary goal or driving force behind a school's adoption and use of an RTI framework.

We conceptualize RTI as a multicomponent framework for the systematic use of data to promote student achievement throughout an entire school.

RTI will not look the same in all schools because contextual factors will vary significantly from district to district, and school to school. The details of a school district's RTI model will depend on contextual factors such as district size and organizational structure, leadership and local expertise, available resources, and demographic characteristics. For example, one district may have a newly purchased evidence-based core reading program in place and a moderate annual budget for purchase of reading intervention curricula. A neighboring district may require teachers to choose between using an outdated basal program and teacher-made materials for instruction until the district budget crisis allows for adoption of a new core reading program. Similarly, schools may serve student populations with differing instructional needs due to differences in cultural or linguistic factors, early literacy and numeracy skills, prekindergarten educational or social experiences, or other factors.

Based on unique contextual factors, school districts should develop an RTI model that demonstrates strong contextual fit, in order to promote buy-in among stakeholders and high fidelity of implementation. The specific policies and procedures included in the district RTI

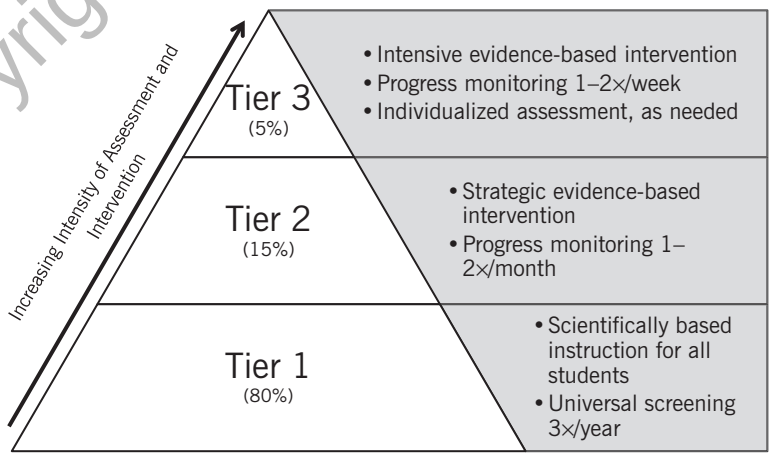

FIGURE 1.1. RTI model.

model should reflect the mission and priorities of the school district, and there should be a reasonable likelihood that the RTI model will meet the needs of the population of students served. The RTI model should take advantage of the district's strengths and available resources, while also reflecting a realistic picture of what is feasible to implement in the current context.

Although the details of RTI models and practices will differ across school districts, there are several critical components essential to any district's RTI model (e.g., NASDSE, 2005; Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010; Glover & Diperna, 2007; NCRTI, 2012). These critical components include:

- *Multi-tiered system of supports.* A multi-tiered prevention system is established to provide a continuum of instructional supports of increasing intensity, with an emphasis on fidelity of implementation. Tier 1, primary prevention, involves provision of scientifically based core instruction to all students. Tier 2, secondary prevention, involves provision of targeted interventions of increased intensity to at-risk or struggling students. Tier 3, tertiary prevention, involves provision of intensive, sometimes individualized, interventions of increased intensity to struggling students who do not respond to Tier 2 interventions.
- *Ongoing student assessment*
  - *Universal screening.* At least three times per year, all students within a grade level are assessed using a brief screening measure. Results are used to identify at-risk and struggling students who may need additional supports to achieve expected learning outcomes.
  - *Progress monitoring.* On a frequent basis, the academic performance of at-risk and struggling students is assessed using repeated measures designed for monitoring progress. Progress is monitored with increasing frequency for students receiving interventions at Tier 2 (e.g., once every 2 to 4 weeks) and Tier 3 (e.g., once every 1 to 2 weeks), to provide educators with timely feedback on the effectiveness of intervention delivered.
- *Collaboration.* Administrators, educators, specialists, and parents work together to implement RTI and promote positive student outcomes. Teams of educators meet regularly to analyze data and improve practices at the district, school, classroom, and individual student levels. Parents are active partners in problem solving when individual students are not responding to instruction and supports provided.
- *Data-based decision making.* At all levels of the multi-tiered system of support, decisions are made based on an analysis of student performance data. Major types of data-based decisions made by RTI teams include screening, instructional planning (e.g., grouping, selecting, and implementing intervention), evaluating student progress in response to intervention and identifying the need for intervention modifications, and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction at the systems level.

At all levels of the multi-tiered system of support, decisions are made based on an analysis of student performance data.

- *Development and sustainability of systems-level capacity.* RTI leaders build capacity throughout the system for initial implementation and institutionalization of new RTI practices. Leaders identify and address variables required for sustainable systems change, such as development of an organizational framework, leadership, readiness, resources, policy development, and professional development.

- National Center on Response to Intervention
  www.rti4success.org
- RTI Action Network
  www.rtinetwork.org
- National Center on Student Progress Monitoring
  www.studentprogress.org
- Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood
  www.crtiec.org
- Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
  www.pbis.org

FIGURE 1.2. RTI-related Internet resources.

A comprehensive discussion of broad RTI models and the specific core components of RTI is beyond the scope of this book, which is intended to focus on effective team practices within RTI; however, many recent books, professional journals, technical reports, and policy guides have been published with extensive coverage of the evidence supporting RTI models and core components. We refer readers looking for up-to-date information about RTI models, practices, and implementation considerations to recent books by Brown-Chidsey and Steege (2010), Burns and Gibbons (2012), and Burns, Riley-Tillman, and VanDerHeyden (2012). Figure 1.2 also provides a list of RTI-related websites that provide information and resources related to RTI models, practices, and implementation.

CURRENT TRENDS IN RTI ADOPTION

It is clear that RTI adoption and implementation levels are on the rise nationwide, resulting in large shifts in school practices related to instruction and intervention, assessment, and decision making. Since 2007, an annual national survey of school administrators has been conducted by Spectrum K12 School Solutions, in collaboration with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), the NASDSE, and the RTI Action Network/National Center on Learning Disabilities (NCLD), to collect data on RTI adoption and implementation. Although not a scientific survey, the results of the Spectrum K12 survey efforts arguably represent the best available estimates of current trends in RTI adoption because there is no national reporting system, database, or published scientific study on the topic to date. At the time of this publication, the most recent survey was completed in the spring of 2011, and included responses from 1,390 school districts across the nation (Spectrum K12 School Solutions, 2011). Some of the major findings illustrating 2011 levels and trends in RTI adoption and implementation include the following:

- Of the school districts that responded, 94% indicated some level of RTI implementation: 24% reported full implementation, 59% reported some level of districtwide implementation or limited piloting, 16% reported investigating or planning for implementation, and 1% reported not considering implementation.
- Trends indicate steady increases in the percentage of responding school districts indi-

cating their district was either fully implementing RTI districtwide, in the process of implementing RTI districtwide, or piloting RTI, from 44% in 2007 to 71% in 2009 to 83% in 2011.

- RTI is more likely to be implemented at the elementary level than secondary levels.
- RTI is most likely to be implemented in the area of reading, followed by math and social behavior.
- Approximately two out of three districts have school-based leadership teams responsible for RTI implementation at the school level, in place at the majority of buildings in the district; 27% of districts report having school-based teams in place at *all* buildings in the district (Spectrum K12 School Solutions, 2011).

In the context of this book about RTI teams, it is interesting to note that RTI leadership teams are one component of RTI models not yet consistently implemented. Only 27% of districts reported having established RTI leadership teams in *all* school buildings. Similarly, a minority of districts reported full implementation of regularly held collaborative meetings focused on analysis of grade-level group data to guide overall core instruction (26% of districts) or problem solving for individual students (26% of districts). In contrast, 72% of districts reported full implementation of a core reading program, and 47% reported full implementation of universal screening three times per year (Spectrum K12 School Solutions, 2011). Based on these data, there is a need for continued focus on establishing school teams that provide leadership and promote data-based decision making at the systems and individual student levels.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF TEAMS WITHIN RTI

RTI requires both shifts in thinking and practice related to the level of collaboration involved in teaching. Historically, teachers have been assigned a class of students for whom they were responsible. Teachers were expected to teach this assigned class of students in a fairly isolated manner ("each classroom an island unto itself"), with acknowledgment that each general education class would consist of students with widely ranging skills and instructional needs. In this context, teachers were accountable for covering the annual grade-level curriculum. Little emphasis was placed on providing differentiated instruction matched to student needs, or on accountability for student outcomes. In recent years, teachers have faced increasing accountability for student outcomes, along with increasing diversity among students and their instructional needs. When a school district adopts RTI, teachers are no longer expected to meet the diverse needs of students alone, but rather to do so in collaboration with teams of educators. School resources are pooled and multi-tiered systems of support are established to promote collaboration across classrooms, general and special education systems, supplemental and remedial programs, and so on. Multi-tiered support systems provide a continuum of instructional supports of varying levels of intensity, to address the diverse instructional needs of students within a school.

This is not business as usual. With RTI, educators must actually *work together* to meet the diverse needs of students. The enormity of this shift in thinking and practice should not be underestimated. When making the shift to RTI, educators are expected to commit to core beliefs such as "All educators must work together to meet the diverse needs of students served

in schools today" and "We should make decisions based on what is best for our students rather than what is most convenient/enjoyable/and so on for us as adults." These changes mean that general education teachers, specialists, related service personnel, administrators, and support staff will need to share expertise and resources (e.g., instructional assistant time, budgets, materials, access to pull-out intervention programs), and support each other to improve student outcomes. Collaboration is not an optional RTI activity, or a practice reserved for the specialists who work with struggling learners. Instead, RTI fundamentally changes the way *all educators* serve students, so that collaboration becomes an integral part of teaching for all general and special education teachers, specialists, related service providers, administrators, and staff. Although specific collaboration practices may "look" different from school to school, what remains critical to successful RTI implementation is that schools create team structures in which *all* teachers participate in team-based decision making, and allocate time during which collaboration is expected to occur.

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Without teams, or without full participation of *all* educators on RTI teams, it is unlikely that collaboration and data-based decision making will be fully implemented throughout the school system. In our work, we often encounter schools that have invested heavily in collecting assessment data for the purposes of RTI decision making and have purchased a variety of evidence-based intervention materials, but struggle to get teachers to *use* the data to drive decisions about instruction. In these schools, it is often the case that a district/school leadership team makes decisions in a top-down fashion, telling teachers and interventionists what to do and when to do it. Most educators don't have the chance to engage in using data collaboratively to make decisions about screening, instructional planning, or evaluating outcomes. Other times, grade-level teams are left to their own devices to determine when to meet and how to make decisions, without sufficient knowledge or skills in problem solving and data-based decision making. In these circumstances, meetings may occur inconsistently, or may end up with decisions made largely based on professional judgment. Data-based decision making never becomes a part of the day-to-day teaching practices of the school. It remains an "additional" task to be completed as part of yet another educational initiative. For RTI implementation to be sustainable over time, it is essential that teams are housed within school systems that institutionalize team collaboration and data-based decision making as a standard part of everyday practice.

Once established, RTI teams should become a permanent structure of the district and school systems. These teams are not short-term committees convened to accomplish a specific task (e.g., select intervention materials for purchase, write a school improvement plan). Instead, they exist to provide a mechanism for *ongoing* decision making focused on providing high-quality instruction and intervention to ensure that each and every student is successful. The work of RTI teams is not finished after 1, 3, or even 5 years of successful RTI implementation. The process of ensuring educational success for each and every student never ends; it repeats year after year as new groups of students enter our schools with changing educational needs. Teams play a crucial role in routinizing collaboration and data-based decision making, and establishing sustainable evidence-based RTI practices within the educational system.

Types of RTI Teams

As school districts adopt and implement RTI, new teams will be created and some preexisting teams may need to be restructured or reorganized to promote efficiency in teaming across the district and avoid duplication of purpose across teams. There are generally four types of teams integral to successful RTI implementation in any district: (1) district RTI leadership teams, (2) school RTI leadership teams, (3) RTI data teams (a.k.a. "grade-level teams"), and (4) problem-solving teams (e.g., Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010; Burns & Gibbons, 2012). Each type of team plays an important role in the success of a district's overall RTI model. Some teams will provide leadership, resources, and oversight. Other teams will implement RTI assessment and intervention practices, and make decisions about the needs of individual students. All teams will use data to drive decision making within the RTI model. Table 1.1 provides a list of the roles and the focus of decision making for each type of team.

RTI adoption and implementation begins with establishing leadership teams. A district-level RTI leadership team consists of key administrative leaders and stakeholders who are given the charge of setting the vision and assuming responsibility for the change process across the district (Sugai & Horner, 2006). District-level leadership team members identify and implement a clear organizational framework to set district improvement goals, assess needs, coordinate implementation, and evaluate the effectiveness of the RTI model over time. Leadership teams apply data-based decision making to a variety of activities at a district level, such as securing and allocating resources, developing policies and procedures, planning and providing professional development, and addressing roadblocks. District-level teams build and provide guidance to school-level leadership teams, which requires team members to make a substantial and long-term commitment of time and resources for several years as leadership capacity and sustainable practices are developed throughout the district.

In addition to a district-level leadership team, each school needs a leadership team because the details of RTI implementation are unique to each school. The school-level RTI leadership team should include members representing administration, the various grade levels of the school, and related service providers within the school. School-level RTI leadership teams play a key role in building consensus among school faculty and staff, securing and allocating resources, providing support to ensure the RTI model is implemented with fidelity, and evaluating outcomes at the school level. Similar to district-level leadership teams, the school-level leadership teams must make a substantial and long-term commitment of time and resources to the development of leadership and sustainable practices within the school building.

Although necessary, leadership teams alone are not sufficient for successful RTI implementation. Each school also needs teams more directly linked to day-to-day classroom operations, and to the learning outcomes of each and every student in the school. RTI data teams, sometimes called grade-level RTI teams, are made up of teachers, specialists, and other service providers responsible for providing instruction and intervention to students within the multi-tiered system of support. These teams are integral to the actual implementation of RTI practices (e.g., assessment, intervention, collaboration) and decision making, such as identifying at-risk and struggling students, making decisions about grouping and instructional supports, examining individual student progress data, and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions at the grade and classroom levels. Schools typically set up multiple RTI data teams within a building, so that teams can focus their attention on a logical subgroup (e.g., grade level, primary/intermediate) of

TABLE 1.1. Summary of School District Teams Involved in RTI Decision Making

Type of team	Roles of the team	Decision-making focus
District RTI leadership team	• Develop a vision and blueprint for RTI implementation throughout the district. • Build consensus among district administration and leadership, develop capacity for RTI leadership at the school building level. • Assess district needs, allocate resources, develop policies and procedures that promote sustainable RTI practices, and provide professional development. • Identify and address barriers to RTI implementation and ongoing systems change efforts. • Use data to evaluate effectiveness of the RTI model at the district and school levels. • Use data to identify the need to provide support to struggling schools.	District level; school level
School RTI leadership team	• Translate the district vision into a vision at the school level, and support implementation of RTI at the school level. • Build consensus among key stakeholders at the building level, develop capacity for RTI leadership at the grade level. • Assess school needs, allocate resources, support implementation of policies and procedures that promote sustainable RTI practices, and provide or arrange professional development for school staff. • Identify and address barriers to RTI implementation. • Use data to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTI model at the school and grade levels. • Use data to identify the need to provide support to struggling teachers/classrooms within the school.	School level; grade level
RTI data team (a.k.a. grade-level team)	• Develop a vision for RTI implementation, including collaboration and tem-based decision making, at the grade level. • Implement RTI practices established by the district and/or school leadership teams. • Meet regularly to collaborate and provide support to each other regarding implementation of RTI. • Identify and address barriers to RTI implementation. • Use data to evaluate the effectiveness of the RTI model at the grade level and classroom level, and modify supports when needed to improve student outcomes. • Use data to conduct universal screening and identify students needing intervention within the grade level.	Grade level; classroom level; individual student level

(continued)

TABLE 1.1. *(continued)*

Type of team	Roles of the team	Decision-making focus
RTI data team *(continued)*	• Use data to conduct instructional planning (e.g., group students with similar needs for intervention, select and modify instruction/intervention provided across tiers). • Use data to evaluate student progress in response to intervention, and modify interventions as needed to improve student outcomes at the grade level.	
Problem-solving team	• Provides assistance to teachers throughout the school regarding individual students who are not responding to interventions across Tiers 1 and/or 2. • Provide assistance regarding individual students when more time or expertise is needed for problem solving than what can be provided on the grade-level RTI data team. • Use a problem-solving model to conduct individualized assessment to identify student needs, plan and support intervention implementation, and evaluate student progress. • Work with other school teams to determine when special education should be considered for struggling students.	Individual student level

the school population. This allows educators to share responsibility for student outcomes among a group of students with whom they are familiar, and for whom they are involved in intervention delivery.

Finally, schools implementing RTI will need one schoolwide problem-solving team that provides assistance to teachers of students who are not responding to interventions at Tier 1 or Tier 2 (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010). Even in the most effective of RTI prevention models, we can expect that a small percentage of students will need individualized assessment and intervention using a problem-solving approach to identify and meet their educational needs. This type of individualized problem solving requires expertise in use of a problem-solving model, and can be time intensive. As a result, this type of individualized problem solving is often beyond the scope of what can be reasonably addressed during grade-level RTI data-team meetings. The schoolwide problem-solving team supplements the efforts of grade-level data teams to address the needs of struggling students, especially at Tier 3, and can assist in making recommendations regarding if or when a comprehensive evaluation to determine the need and eligibility for special education is warranted for struggling students. Problem-solving team membership should include representatives of teachers from multiple grade levels and specialists with expertise in use of a problem-solving model. The teachers and parents of struggling students should be included in the team problem-solving process for individual students.

Organization of RTI Teams

Although most districts implementing RTI should develop the four types of teams described above, the exact configuration of RTI teams and the relationships among teams within a school

district will vary depending on contextual factors unique to each district. When creating a team structure, factors to consider include the size of the district and schools, the number of teachers within each school and grade level, the number of at-risk and struggling students within schools and grade levels, and other existing teams (e.g., positive behavioral interventions and supports, administrative, school improvement, student study team). For example, most small to midsized school districts only need one district-level RTI leadership team, but some larger districts may decide to create two RTI leadership teams and divide responsibilities (e.g., elementary and secondary, academics and social behavior, geographical regions). Alternately, some very small districts may need only one combined district and school RTI leadership team, such as rural districts with only one K–12 school building.

Because the details of RTI practices and implementation will vary from school to school within a school district, it is necessary that each school building identify RTI teams to serve both leadership (school RTI leadership-team) and operational (grade-level RTI data-team) functions. In most schools, a logical team structure involves one school-level leadership team, along with one data team at each grade level, as illustrated in Figure 1.3. Some smaller schools, such as schools with only one teacher per grade level, may find that grade-level teams are not a logical structure that works for their context. Instead, it might make more sense in small schools to form teams based on combined grade levels, such as one team of primary grade (K–2) teachers and one team of upper elementary grade (3–5) teachers.

Figure 1.4 illustrates one possible configuration of RTI teams within a school district with elementary schools of varying sizes. Note that each of the three schools within this district have organized RTI data teams in a unique manner, based on the size and resources of each school. School A created six data teams, with one at each grade level. School B created only two data teams, consisting of teachers grouped by primary and intermediate grade levels. School C created four data teams by grouping teachers at some, but not all, grade levels. These groupings made the most sense to the faculty of School C, because the school used a "blended-grades"

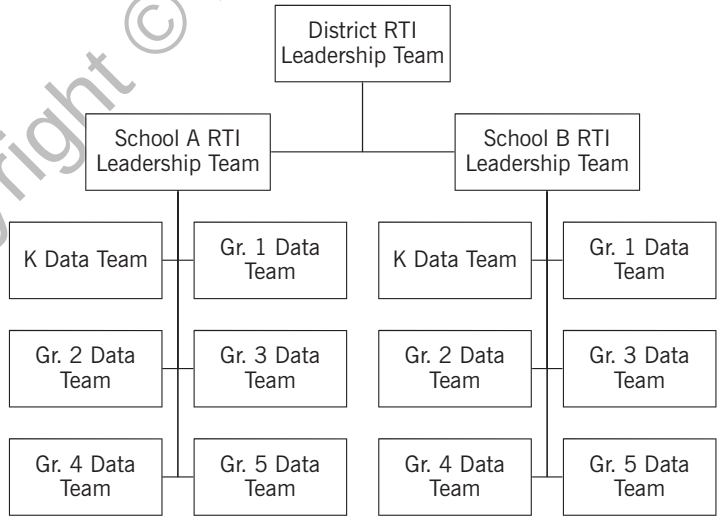

FIGURE 1.3. School district organizational chart for RTI leadership and data-based decision-making teams: Two schools.

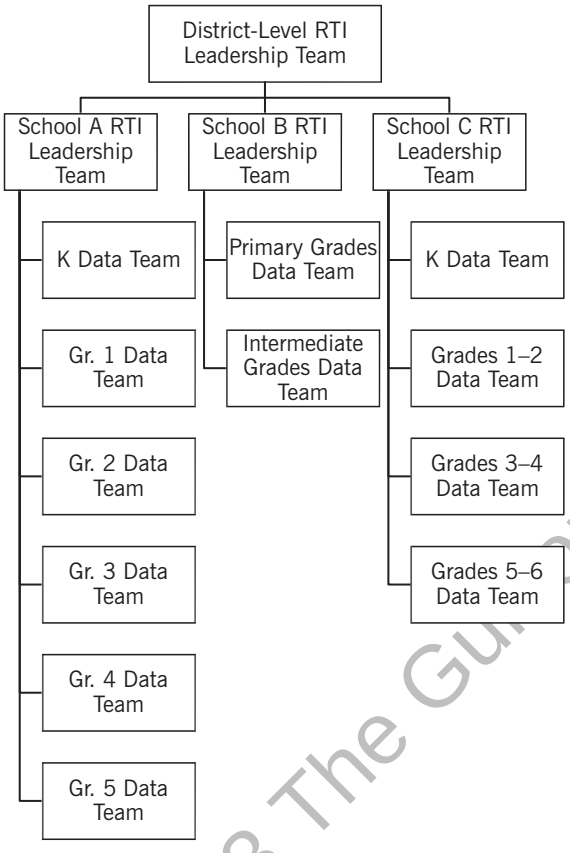

FIGURE 1.4. School district organizational chart for RTI leadership and data-based decision-making teams: Three schools.

model and frequently provided instruction in cross-grade group settings. Other alternatives are possible; the idea is to find a team structure that can be sustained in your district or school over time, and capitalizes on the resources and strengths of your school and local context.

SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a broad overview of RTI, current trends in RTI adoption, types of data-based decision-making teams, and their role in RTI models. Throughout the remainder of this book, our discussion of RTI teams and their role in data-based decision making is based on the following assumptions. First, we assume that the primary purpose for implementing RTI, and therefore RTI teams, is to prevent achievement problems and promote positive academic outcomes for all students. We assume RTI teams will be created in school districts that have adopted and are striving for full RTI implementation, and that those school districts provide professional development to RTI team members (and all staff) to develop a basic understanding of RTI and key components such as evidence-based intervention, assessment for universal screening and progress monitoring, data-based decision making, and collaboration. Finally, we

recognize that RTI teams exist within the complex systems of schools and school districts, and as a result, will take a variety of forms. Despite these unique differences due to contextual factors, we assume that collaboration and data-based decision making are desirable activities for all RTI teams.

We now shift our focus to the main purpose of this book: promoting effective data-based team decision making within RTI leadership and data teams. For the purposes of this book, we've elected to focus our discussion primarily on grade-level RTI data teams at the elementary level, and on the application of RTI to promote academic achievement. We acknowledge the potential of RTI for promoting positive outcomes in secondary settings and in the area of social behavior, although there are unique considerations for teaming with each of these applications of RTI beyond those discussed in this book. Despite our focus on RTI teams for the promotion of academic outcomes, we believe many of the practices for effective team-based collaboration and data-based decision making described in this book are applicable to other school-based teams that differ in focus or setting.

The remainder of this book is divided into three parts, addressing activities that promote effective teaming before, during, and after RTI team meetings. Part I examines premeeting activities that set the stage for productive meetings, including setting up teams, establishing routines, and premeeting planning. Part II takes a closer look at what happens during team meetings, such as facilitating productive meetings, preventing and confronting common roadblocks, and making decisions for screening, intervention planning, progress monitoring, and outcomes evaluation. Part III focuses on activities occurring after team meetings, including creating contingencies that promote fidelity of implementation of teaming and other RTI practices, addressing logistical challenges of RTI collaboration, and building capacity and sustainable team practices that will endure over time.

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