



# Ensuring Fidelity of Curricula and Instruction

## Ensuring Fidelity of Curricula

The professional development plan for curriculum implementation is dynamic in nature and results in the curriculum being implemented with fidelity. It is a plan that proactively identifies activities based on individual staff learning needs and will result in the knowledge and skills necessary to utilize the curriculum. It ensures that staff are accessing and utilizing curricular materials in the expected manner, by planning for and conducting intermediate and follow-up activities. To accomplish this, leadership teams should establish methods for monitoring the use of the curriculum by individual teachers from which information is collected and utilized to differentiate among ongoing professional development and support for each staff member.

Activities for monitoring the individuals' fidelity of curriculum implementation are not intended to be punitive, but rather, should be understood as a piece of the overall professional development plan, resulting in further staff support as needed. To accomplish this, a method to check for correct use of the curriculum materials needs to be established. Many purchased curricula and programs come with fidelity-monitoring tools such as observation or walk-through forms. Leadership teams are responsible for establishing a plan to monitor and support the correct and effective use of curriculum materials.

## Planning Professional Development

The Building Leadership Team will identify the professional development needs related to curriculum implementation by identifying and considering the targeted staff and the qualities of each specified curriculum.

**Core Curriculum**—It is important that ALL staff with instructional responsibility have a solid understanding of the core curriculum and receive professional development that enables them to implement it with fidelity. ALL staff in this instance includes the staff responsible for instruction at all three MTSS levels. This is necessary to ensure that curriculum that is implemented at the supplemental or intensive level is aligned to the core curriculum.

**Supplemental and Intensive Curricula**—It is not necessary that all staff in a building know how to implement the supplemental and/or intensive curricula; however, it is important that everyone involved in collaborative teams understand the skills targeted in each curriculum so they can be involved in instructional planning.

The most effective intervention teachers are likely to be those with the most training and experience. However, in the absence of well-trained and experienced intervention specialists, less experienced teachers, or even qualified para-professionals, can deliver effective interventions if they are trained to use a well-developed, explicit, and systematic intervention program. A good rule of thumb is that the less experienced the teacher, the more structured and “scripted” the intervention program should be. (Torgesen, 2006, p. 5)

Media specialists, art teachers, even assistant principals can provide effective interventions when they have been trained to use a well-structured and systematic intervention program.

One of the leadership team's challenges is to identify resources that may already be available in the system to provide effective interventions for students. It is critical that the leadership team ensure that intervention programs are implemented regularly with fidelity.



# Ensuring Fidelity of Curricula and Instruction

## Ensuring Fidelity of Instructional Practices

The following steps can be used to decide how to support staff in the use of evidence-based instructional practices:

- Develop a plan to provide professional development to appropriate instructional staff (including ESOL, Migrant, Title, SPED, paraprofessionals, etc.).
- Determine the key elements of instruction that need to be monitored for fidelity.
- Determine a method (e.g., walk-through, peer coaching, etc.) to monitor key elements for fidelity.
- Develop and implement a plan to provide training and coaching to instructional staff who need additional assistance in providing instruction, as identified through monitoring. Monitor the plan for fidelity of implementation.

In planning professional development, it is helpful for the leadership team to consider the following questions specific to each curriculum, strategy, or practice selected:

- Who will monitor the use/implementation (fidelity) of the curriculum, the strategy, or the practice?
- What method will be used to monitor the use/implementation (fidelity) of curriculum, the strategy, or the practice?
- How frequently will the use/implementation (fidelity) of the curriculum, the strategy, or the practice be monitored?
- When and how will ongoing professional development for staff using the curriculum, the strategy, or the practice be provided?

These questions are designed to help leadership teams as they begin the development of an overall professional development plan. Once specific decisions are made, the Building Leadership Team should record the results on the building's results-based staff development plan and/or on the Professional Development Planning tool. The leadership team should also consider whether the discussion of professional development and fidelity of instruction has led to a need to develop an Action Plan.

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