



# Illinois State Board of Education


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Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

March 14, 2011

**TO:** Eligible Applicants

**FROM:** Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.   
State Superintendent of Education

**SUBJECT:** **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):** State Personnel Development Grant: Illinois IHE Partnership

## General Information

**Purpose of RFP:** The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) seeks to establish and implement the Illinois Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) Partnership by soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to coordinate and implement the services outlined in this RFP and to serve as the administrative agent.

**Eligible Applicants:** Illinois IHEs with approved educator preparation programs are eligible to apply.

**Grant Award:** One grant will be awarded in FY 2011 (year one of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. The annual grant award amount in Years 2 through 5 (FY 2012, FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015) is estimated to be \$200,000. The annual grant amounts will depend on the needs addressed and scope of activities in each year and the total appropriation for the program.

Allocations are preliminary, and payment under this grant is subject to passage of a sufficient appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly and sufficient appropriation by the U.S. Congress for federal programs. Obligations of the State Board of Education will cease immediately without further obligation should the agency fail to receive sufficient federal funds for this program.

**Grant Period:** The initial grant period will begin no sooner than May 1, 2011, and will extend from the execution date of the grant agreement until September 30, 2011. The successful applicant may reapply for up to four additional years, with subsequent grant periods extending from October 1 of each year through September 30 of the following year. Funding in the

subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the program and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

**Application Deadline:** Applications must be received by ISBE no later than **April 22, 2011**. Mail the **original and five (5) hard copies** (six (6) applications in all), plus two (2) compact discs (CDs) containing PDF or Microsoft Word® files of completed application components 1 – 7 and 9 (see “Proposal Format” on pages 11 and 12), to the *Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, N-253, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, Attn: Kathryn Cox, Special Education Services*. No FAX copies will be accepted. The original, five copies, and two CDs must be received by the due date in order for the proposal to be considered. **Late or substantively incomplete proposals will not be eligible for consideration.**

Proposals may also be hand-delivered to the following locations:

Springfield Office  
Information Center  
1st Floor  
100 North First Street

Chicago Office  
Reception Area  
Suite 14-300  
100 West Randolph Street

**Online Bidders’ Forum:** An Online Bidders’ Forum about this RFP will be conducted via email at the following address: [ihfrfp@isbe.net](mailto:ihfrfp@isbe.net). This email address will be available for posting questions during the application period. All questions and answers will be posted at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IHERFP\\_QA.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IHERFP_QA.pdf) and will remain on the website until April 22, 2011. Applicants are encouraged to review information posted on the forum before submitting their proposals. Should the conditions of this RFP change prior to the deadline, ISBE will post the changes at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm).

**Contact Person:** For more information on this RFP, contact Kathryn Cox by phone at 217-782-5589 or by email at [kcox@isbe.net](mailto:kcox@isbe.net).

## **Background**

In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded ISBE a five-year State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) under Part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The overarching goal of Illinois’ SPDG Project is to:

*Scale up implementation of a coordinated, statewide system of personnel development that will increase the capacity of school systems to establish and use a multi-tiered model of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment to improve the progress and performance of all students, including those with disabilities.*

This goal will be accomplished through the project objectives, which are to:

1. Deliver research-based professional development, technical assistance, and coaching to increase the number of general and special education administrators, teachers, and other personnel and parents who understand and implement a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention, and assessment, resulting in improved student performance.
2. Increase the number of parents who participate and their level of participation in the educational decision-making process for their child across district sites.
3. Increase the number of IHE undergraduate and graduate educator preparation programs that implement RtI content in their curricula.
4. Refine and implement a comprehensive evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of project activities.

Further details of Illinois' SPDG Project are available in ISBE's federal grant application, which may be accessed at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm). Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the application in preparing proposals in response to this RFP.

As stated previously, the purpose of this RFP is to establish and implement the Illinois IHE Partnership. The IHE Partnership will serve as the primary mechanism for accomplishing SPDG Project Objective 3 above and will also have certain responsibilities for supporting accomplishment of SPDG Project Objective 4 above (see "Program Specifications," pages 5 – 9 for further details).

The Illinois IHE Partnership will work directly with teams at Illinois IHEs to incorporate critical RtI elements (e.g., differentiated instruction; a multi-tiered system of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment) into educator preservice and graduate program curricula and to develop and implement a replicable process for identifying and placing undergraduate and graduate students in field experiences where RtI practices are in place. The IHE Partnership will also have responsibility for the provision of professional development opportunities for IHE faculty. Finally, the IHE Partnership will work with ISBE to establish and implement a replicable process through which IHEs can forge collaborative relationships with districts to increase the number of graduates employed in low-performing districts with high populations (40 percent or more) of students from low-income backgrounds.

With regard to incorporation of critical RtI elements into educator preservice and graduate program curricula, recent changes in the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) that will take effect on July 1, 2013 (see 23 Illinois Administrative Code 24.130 at <http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/24ark.pdf>) will be relevant to the work of the Illinois IHE Partnership. In particular, revisions made to the standards include the incorporation of critical components directly connected to RtI practices. Accordingly, in working with IHE educator preparation programs to review and incorporate RtI elements into course curricula, the IHE Partnership will be expected to coordinate this process with any work the participating IHEs may conduct to align their curricula with the revised IPTS.

Existing and new ISBE initiatives will also be relevant to the work of the Illinois IHE Partnership. These initiatives are Illinois ASPIRE and the Illinois RtI Network. A brief overview of each, including their relevance to the IHE Partnership, follows.

### **Illinois ASPIRE**

Illinois has 15 years of experience with RtI implementation, starting from a small-scale, grass roots approach under the Flexible Service Delivery initiative and expanding to larger scale implementation in recent years through Illinois ASPIRE (I-ASPIRE) and through the Illinois State RtI Plan. Implemented under the 2005 – 2010 Illinois SPDG, the primary goal of I-ASPIRE is to increase the capacity of school systems to implement a multi-tiered model of scientifically based instruction, intervention, and assessment, which includes RtI. The intended long-term outcome of the project is improved progress and performance in reading of students with and without disabilities.

I-ASPIRE established a regionalized system of personnel development via four regional “centers,” each of which employs personnel with expertise in RtI. Through these centers, over a five-year period the project staff conducted more than 400 training and technical assistance events for district and school teams, with participation by approximately 600 local education agencies (LEAs). They have also provided onsite technical assistance and coaching to 68 schools in 41 districts; in turn, these schools served as data collection sites for project evaluation.

Another component of I-ASPIRE involved partnerships with IHEs in each of the four I-ASPIRE regions. Through these partnerships, I-ASPIRE conducted a review of course syllabi from selected preservice and graduate programs (e.g., special education, elementary education, school psychology, school administration) and staff interviews to determine the extent to which the programs included instructional content on RtI. Five IHEs participated in this process, submitting 85 syllabi for review.

The results of the syllabi review are discussed in Appendix A. Although the review involved a relatively small sample of IHE program coursework, the data illustrate a need to expand partnership activities with IHEs to conduct further program reviews and incorporate RtI content into preservice and graduate coursework. Accordingly, the Illinois IHE Partnership will build on the work begun under I-ASPIRE to follow up with the IHEs that participated in the original review and expand the review process with other IHEs.

I-ASPIRE also developed a series of high-quality, research-based professional development modules that were used to deliver small- and large-scale training throughout the project. These modules subsequently served as the basis for ISBE development of a set of 13 standardized training modules focused on improving student performance (see Appendix B). The Illinois IHE Partnership will use the ISBE training modules as the primary training curriculum in the area of RtI.

## **Illinois RtI Network**

The Illinois RtI Network, or I-RtI Network, is being established under a separate RFP and will serve as the primary mechanism for accomplishing Objective 1 of the SPDG Project. It will also have certain responsibilities for supporting accomplishment of Objective 3.

The I-RtI Network will provide standardized professional development, technical assistance, and coaching to educators, parents, and IHE faculty throughout the state. These services will focus on improving student performance in grades K-12 through the implementation of a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention, and assessment, including RtI, with an emphasis on administrative leadership; scientific, research-based reading and math curricula and instruction at grades K-12; data-based decision making; universal screening and progress monitoring; and parent involvement. To enhance project replicability and to ensure that evaluation can be conducted at the district, school and student levels, district sites will be identified within each of the geographic regions (defined by the six ROE areas of the state; see Appendix C) served by the I-RtI Network. For more information about the I-RtI Network, please see the RFP for establishing the project, which is posted at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm).

To support Objective 3, the I-RtI Network will be required to work collaboratively with the Illinois IHE Partnership in the provision of training on RtI content for IHE deans, program chairs, and faculty. The Network will also provide technical expertise to the IHE Partnership in critical RtI content to support the syllabi review process discussed above and facilitate partnerships between participating I-RtI Network districts and the IHE Partnership. Accordingly, in conducting its work, the IHE Partnership will be required to collaborate with the I-RtI Network.

## **Program Specifications**

The primary purpose of the Illinois SPDG Project is to effect a significant, systemic change in how Illinois manages its special education personnel development system, resulting in an infrastructure that will last beyond the grant period. The goal, objectives, and activities of the project are linked through overarching themes of recommended practice in general and special education and personnel development, and through themes of partnership and collaboration. Criteria grounded in these themes guide the major project activities.

As discussed previously, the Illinois IHE Partnership will be implemented over a five-year period. Applicants must submit a proposal that contains a detailed action plan, with specific timelines across the five-year project period, describing how the program specifications below will be met.

**Required Partnerships and Collaboration:** The Illinois IHE Partnership must be a collaborative partnership of Illinois IHEs with approved educator preparation programs. One or more representatives from at least three different IHEs must be involved in the development of the

proposal. Participants in the planning process and their roles must be described, and letters of intent to participate in the partnership must be submitted with the proposal.

During project implementation the Illinois IHE Partnership must also work collaboratively with the I-Rtl Network grantee to seek and utilize project staff consultation on the review of preservice and graduate programs and incorporation of Rtl content into general and special education preservice and graduate curricula. This collaboration must also include delivery of training on Rtl content for IHE deans, program chairs, and other faculty.

**Project Personnel:** The Illinois IHE Partnership must directly employ, contract with, and/or purchase full time equivalency (FTE) of individuals who will conduct the work of the partnership. These individuals will include the following:

- Part-time Project Coordinator, who will lead and participate in the work to be conducted in reviewing educator preservice and graduate programs; incorporation of Rtl content into curricula, including provision of technical assistance to IHE teams to support this process; delivery of training to IHE leadership and faculty; and establishing and implementing a process for identifying and placing students in field experiences where Rtl practices are in place and for collaborating with school district to increase the number of graduates employed in low-performing districts. This individual must have strong knowledge and skills in school improvement and Rtl, at least three years experience teaching Rtl content, and at least a Masters Degree in education (Doctorate preferred).
- Part-time Technical Assistance Coordinators, who will work with teams at Illinois IHEs to support the review of preservice and graduate program course syllabi in order to determine the degree to which Rtl content is implemented. They will also provide technical assistance via workgroups, e-mail, and telephone to support IHE teams' incorporation of Rtl content into existing preservice and graduate programs. If needed, they may also be involved in delivery of training. These individuals must have strong knowledge and skills in school improvement and Rtl, experience in facilitating and supporting workgroups, and at least a Bachelor Degree in education (Masters Degree preferred).

**Professional Development and Technical Assistance Plan:** The Illinois IHE Partnership must implement a coordinated plan for delivery of professional development and technical assistance services to IHEs, in accordance with ISBE's federal SPDG application (available at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm); in particular, see Table 11 on pages 41 – 46 of the Project Narrative). This plan must address each of the areas discussed below.

Professional Development: The Illinois IHE Partnership will be responsible for coordinating professional development activities for a target audience of IHE deans, program chairs, and faculty. In meeting the professional development requirements, the IHE Partnership must collaborate with the I-Rtl Network to provide training opportunities that include delivery of the ISBE training modules (see Appendix B). The I-Rtl Network will make its staff available to deliver such training primarily as part of regularly-scheduled I-Rtl Network district training events in which IHE faculty will be invited to participate. Separate events for IHE faculty may also be conducted as needed.

All professional development activities must meet the NCLB definition of professional development, in which the National Staff Development Council Standards for Professional Development are embedded (see Appendix D). Also, the successful grantee must be an approved ISBE provider of continuing professional development activities for certificate renewal purposes or become an approved provider within the first six months of the first grant year. Information about the provider approval process, including an on-line application, is available at [www.isbe.net/certification/html/providers.htm](http://www.isbe.net/certification/html/providers.htm).

Technical Assistance: The first group of IHE teams that will receive technical assistance must be established by July 2011, with priority given to the eight Illinois IHEs with the largest educator preparation programs (Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Edwardsville, Eastern Illinois University, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Northern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, and National Louis University). In order to receive services through the Illinois IHE Partnership, all participating IHEs will be required to commit to making changes in their curricula to incorporate RtI content. Accordingly, the IHE Partnership must establish a process for soliciting the participation of IHEs and securing commitment from deans and department chairs to fully implement the curricula review and revision process.

Work with the IHEs listed above must begin by September 2011 and continue into at least Year 3 of the project, with other IHEs to be added in Years 3 and 4 where feasible. Technical assistance services must be provided to the IHE teams via workgroups, online meetings, telephone, and e-mail to:

- Conduct and support the review of preservice and graduate program course syllabi in order to determine the degree to which RtI content is implemented. To conduct the syllabi review, the Illinois IHE Partnership will use the IHE checklist in Appendix E that was developed and subsequently used by I-ASPIRE.
- Support IHE teams' incorporation of RtI content into existing educator preservice and graduate programs, including elementary and secondary teacher education, special education, school service personnel, and school administration.

As stated previously, to the greatest extent possible, this work must be coordinated with any activities the participating IHEs may undertake in conjunction with aligning their curricula with the revised IPTS that will take effect on July 1, 2013.

Field Experience Placements of Students and Employment of Graduates in School Districts: The Illinois IHE Partnership must work with identified Illinois IHE teams and ISBE to establish and implement a process that IHEs can use to:

1. Identify and place undergraduate and graduate students in field experiences where RtI practices are in place and implemented with fidelity and
2. Forge collaborative relationships with districts to increase the number of graduates employed in low-performing districts with high populations (40 percent or more) of students from low-income backgrounds.

Applicants must project: 1) the number of people who will be trained each year and the number of training events to be held, 2) the number of IHEs that will receive technical assistance each year in the review and enhancement of preservice and graduate programs, 3) the amount and type(s) of technical assistance that will be provided annually, and 4) the number of IHEs that will be involved in developing/refining processes associated with student field experience placements and employment of graduates in low-performing districts.

Applicants must also delineate strategies to ensure that IHEs and their faculty have equitable access to the training and technical assistance services to be provided. In addition, applicants must describe how the proposed Illinois IHE Partnership will facilitate opportunities for networking among and partnering of IHEs that participate in the training and technical assistance activities of the project.

**Project Evaluation:** ISBE will select and issue separate funding for an external project evaluator who will have primary responsibility for implementing the project evaluation plan (see Appendix F and/or refer to ISBE's federal grant application for the SPDG Project at [http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm)). In addition, the Illinois IHE Partnership will be responsible for carrying out evaluation activities to support SPDG Project Objective 4 (refer to page 3), including the evaluation of the training and technical assistance services provided by the Partnership. Such evaluation will include collection of data to determine the impact of services on changes in IHE preservice and graduate curricula, field placements, and employment of graduates. To that end, the Project Coordinator must work directly with the external project evaluator to fulfill all project evaluation requirements.

The Project Coordinator must:

- Participate in a training overview of the project evaluation tools and system.
- Collaborate with the external project evaluator to implement the project evaluation/data collection system (to be established and maintained by the external project evaluator).
- Work with the external project evaluator to refine the IHE Checklist (Appendix E) and, if necessary, develop new evaluation tools.
- Work with the external project evaluator on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding (a) training provided to IHE leadership and faculty, (b) technical assistance services delivered to IHE teams, (c) the impact of Illinois IHE Partnership services on implementation of RtI content in IHE curricula, student field experience placements in schools implementing RtI, and employment of graduates in low-performing districts.
- Provide assistance to the technical assistance coordinators on the data collection system.
- Keep the external project evaluator informed of any challenges to the data collection efforts so that technical assistance can be provided in a timely manner.
- Ensure that data are submitted at least quarterly via the project evaluation system.

**Project Website:** The I-RtI Network will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a project website. The Illinois IHE Partnership will be required to maintain a page on the website and post informational materials and other resources pertinent to the activities and services of the Partnership.

**Communication with ISBE:** Ongoing communication with ISBE for continuous improvement will be critical in order to ensure that state priorities are addressed. Such communication includes regular meetings with ISBE's SPDG Project Director, submission of periodic reports (number and format to be provided by ISBE), and participating in quarterly meetings of the SPDG project advisory bodies, which will include the Illinois State Advisory Council (ISAC) on the Education of Students with Disabilities and the RtI Stakeholder Group.

The grant awarded in FY 2011 will be used for planning and initial implementation of the Illinois IHE Partnership. Refinement and full implementation will begin in FY 2012 and will continue through the end of the project.

It is intended that the Illinois IHE Partnership services will continue to have an impact on IHE educator preservice and graduate programs after the grant period ends, along with continued implementation of the trained RtI practices; therefore, applicants must describe in their proposals strategies for sustaining the services without federal grant support. In addition, each applicant must describe in its proposal the local resources (e.g., in-kind contributions such as staff or office and meeting space, use of equipment) that will be contributed to the project.

### **Fiscal Information**

One grant will be awarded in FY 2011 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. It is anticipated that the grant will continue for four additional years (FY 2012 through FY 2015), with an estimated annual amount of \$200,000. As stated previously, all annual grant amounts will depend on the needs addressed and scope of activities in each year and the total appropriation for the program.

Applicants must allocate funds for:

- A part-time project coordinator position.
- Part-time technical assistance coordinator positions. The technical assistance coordinator positions must be allocated to ensure appropriate levels of support to the IHE teams.
- Maintaining the Illinois IHE Partnership page of the project website.

It is expected that the successful grantee will contribute local resources (e.g., in-kind contributions such as use of equipment, office and meeting space) for the project, and these must be described in the proposal.

Annual funding in FY 2011 through FY 2015 will be contingent upon the following factors:

- A sufficient appropriation for the program;
- Satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period in relation to the goals, objectives, and activities specified in the approved proposal;
- Verification of approval as an ISBE provider of continuing professional development activities for certificate renewal purposes;

- A continued need for grant funds as evidenced by documented refinement and full implementation of the project; and
- Evidence of the Illinois IHE Partnership outcomes being sustainable after the end of the funding period.

Funds **may** be used for such purposes as:

- Salaries and/or purchased services of a part-time project coordinator, part-time technical assistance coordinators, and other personnel for which a need is clearly demonstrated in the proposal;
- Costs related to travel in providing training and technical assistance services (please note the Travel Requirements below);
- Supplies and materials costs associated with the development and provision of training and technical assistance, including translation, Braille, and audio tapes as needed;
- Room/facility rental associated with provision of training;
- Interpreters and language translators at training sites;
- Project evaluation activities;
- Purchase of equipment to support activities of the project (not to exceed 3 percent of the total budget; it is expected that such purchases will primarily occur in Year 1 of the project and therefore not require an annual allocation of funds for equipment);
- Postage, printing, duplicating, telephone, and fax;
- Advertising of training and technical assistance opportunities; and
- Administrative OR indirect costs (not to exceed 3 percent of the total budget).

Travel Requirements: Travel expenses, including mileage and, where overnight stay is required, lodging and per diem, are subject to the state rates according to the Governor's Travel Control Board as outlined in the Reimbursement Schedule of the Travel Guide for State Employees and any annual changes found therein. The Travel Guide can be found at [http://www.state.il.us/cms/2\\_servicese\\_oth/trvlguid.htm](http://www.state.il.us/cms/2_servicese_oth/trvlguid.htm).

Funds **may not** be used to:

- Supplant salaries of existing staff;
- Supplant activities and services funded by other federal, state, and local sources; or
- Cover costs of moving, remodeling, or building.

For purposes of compliance with Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the "Stevens Amendment"), applicants are advised that 100 percent of the funds for this program are derived from federal sources. The total amount of federal funding involved is approximately \$100,000 in FY 2011 and \$200,000 per year in FY 2012 through FY 2015.

## Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal. **Substantively incomplete proposals will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant.**

Attachments 1 – 9 must be completed, signed as applicable, and submitted with the Proposal Narrative (no form is provided for the Proposal Narrative). **Please note:** This RFP and all application forms are available on the ISBE website at [http://www.isbe.net/specified/html/grant\\_info.htm](http://www.isbe.net/specified/html/grant_info.htm). If accessed via the website, the forms may be completed on the computer but must be printed and paper copies submitted with the proposal.

- \_\_\_ **1. Cover Page (Attachment 1):** Must be signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal. One or more representatives from each of the required partners must be involved in the development of the proposal. Participants in the planning process, their titles, and their roles in the development of the application must be included.
- \_\_\_ **2. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 2):** Briefly describe the objectives, key tasks, and activities of the project. The abstract must be double-spaced using a 12-point font and one inch margins and may not exceed three pages.
- \_\_\_ **3. Proposal Narrative:** Follow the specifications found under “Proposal Narrative Requirements” on pages 13 and 14.
- \_\_\_ **4. Project Action Plan (Attachment 3):** In conjunction with each component addressed under “Program Specifications,” pages 5 – 9, use the form provided to state the key tasks for each objective and outline detailed activities (project actions) for accomplishing each key task in a time-specific format for each fiscal year (FY 2011 through FY 2015). Include the methods and procedures to be used to complete each key task, specify the person(s) responsible, identify the population to be served (where applicable), document the evaluation methods, and state the expected outcomes/impact. **(Please note:** It is understood that, as a result of ongoing needs assessment data, certain revisions to proposed activities for FY 2012 through FY 2015 may be necessary during project implementation.)
- \_\_\_ **5. Evaluation Design (Attachment 4):** Using the form provided, describe the proposed procedures for carrying out the evaluation activities for the relevant project objective(s) delineated in Appendix F in order to determine whether progress is being made toward achieving the objective(s). Describe how the project coordinator and other project staff will fulfill their responsibilities related to collecting, verifying, and reporting evaluation data, including how coordination with the external evaluator will occur.
- \_\_\_ **6. Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 5a):** Must be submitted on the form provided. Separate forms must be completed for each of Years 1 through 5.

The form completed for year one must be signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal. The payment schedule must be based on the projected date of expenditures and be prepared in accordance with the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures handbook found at [http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal\\_procedure\\_handbk.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf). Supplies, equipment, contracted services, and professional development should be requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated.

### **Budget Considerations**

- Administrative costs and equipment costs are each limited to no more than 3 percent of the grant budget. In lieu of charging direct administrative costs to the grant, applicants may claim indirect costs, which are also limited to no more than 3 percent of the grant budget.
- Funds must be allocated for each of the following: a part-time project coordinator position, part-time technical assistance coordinator positions, and project website.

- \_\_\_ **7. Budget Breakdown (Attachment 5b):** Separate budget breakdown forms must be completed for Year 1 (maximum of \$100,000) and for each of Years 2 through 5 (maximum of \$200,000 per year) of the project. Each must include detailed descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary and cross-referenced to the project objectives. Subcontract information must be included, if applicable (see item 7 of the document titled “Certification and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant” in Attachment 7).
- \_\_\_ **8. Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 6 – 9c):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification forms listed below and attached to this RFP. These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.
- a. Program-Specific Terms of the Grant (Attachment 6)
  - b. Certification and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant (in Attachment 7)
  - c. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion (Attachment 8)
  - d. Certificate Regarding Lobbying (Attachment 9) and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Attachments 9a – 9c)
- \_\_\_ **9. Letters of Intent to Partner:** Attach a letter of intent from each partnering entity, signed by the official authorized to commit the entity to the project, that includes a brief description of the entity’s role in the project, the qualifications of the proposed staff to be involved, and the anticipated amount of time to be spent with the project activities.

## Proposal Narrative Requirements

The proposal narrative should include the information requested below in the order in which it is presented. Where appropriate, describe activities for each of the five fiscal years included in the project. The narrative must be double-spaced using a 12-point font and one inch margins and may not exceed 30 pages.

- A. Partnerships and Collaboration: Describe the required partners who participated in the development of the proposal and will participate in the implementation of the Illinois IHE Partnership, as well as the commitment of each to the project. Discuss the strategies that will be used to coordinate project activities with the I-Rtl Network, as discussed under “Program Specifications.”
- B. Project Personnel: Describe the staff and staffing patterns to be used in the provision of training and technical assistance, including how key project staff (project coordinator and technical assistance coordinators) will be secured. List each person to be employed and/or contracted with by name (if known), indicate the responsibilities each will have in the project, and describe the qualifications of professional and support staff, including the experience each has had in the type of work to be performed. Indicate projected numbers of IHE teams and programs to be served by each of the staff positions and the percentage of time that each staff person will be committed to this project.
- C. Professional Development and Technical Assistance Plan: Describe in detail how the professional development and technical assistance services will be structured and delivered and provide a rationale for the chosen approach. Also describe the process to be used in soliciting the participation of IHEs in the Illinois IHE Partnership services and securing commitment from deans and department chairs to fully implement the curricula review and revision process. Include annual projections of:
  1. The number of people to be trained and/or receive technical assistance each year,
  2. The number of training events to be held,
  3. The amount and type(s) of technical assistance services to be provided,
  4. The number of IHE teams to be established and served, and
  5. The number of IHEs that will be involved in developing and implementing processes associated with student field experience placements and employment of graduates in low-performing districts.

Discuss how the Illinois IHE Partnership will work with the participating IHEs teams and ISBE to develop and/or refine a process that IHEs can use to identify and place undergraduate and graduate students in field experiences where Rtl practices are in place and to forge collaborative relationships with districts to increase the number of graduates employed in low-performing districts with high populations of students from low-income backgrounds. Also discuss how the proposed IHE Partnership will ensure that IHEs have equitable access to the training and technical assistance services to be provided. This should include strategies for publicizing professional development events and other services of the IHE

Partnership. Provide examples of the types of opportunities to be arranged for participating IHE teams to network among and partner with each other. Describe the local resources (e.g., in-kind contributions such as staff or building space, use of equipment) that will be contributed to the project.

- D. Project Evaluation: Describe how the required evaluation activities will be carried out and coordinated with the statewide evaluator. (See Appendix F.)
- E. Project Website: Describe the approach to be used in posting and updating information and resources on the Illinois IHE Partnership page of the I-RtI Network website.
- F. Communication with ISBE: Discuss how the requirements for regular communication with ISBE will be fulfilled, including timely reporting and interaction with the SPDG project director and project advisory bodies (ISAC and the RtI Stakeholder Group).
- G. Grantee Capability: Discuss the capacity of the entity that will administer the project to oversee and carry out a project of this magnitude and scope, including administrative, organizational, and fiscal capabilities. Describe previous experience that the administrative agent and the required partners have had with similar projects involving delivery of professional development and technical assistance, as well as their knowledge and expertise in RtI content, educator preparation program development and review, and collaborating with public school districts to identify appropriate placements for student field experiences IHE and to facilitate the employment of graduates in low-performing districts.
- H. Sustainability: Describe steps that will be taken toward maintaining the project services and implementation of the trained RtI practices and content in IHE educator preparation programs, as well as the processes associated with student field experience placements and employment of graduates in low-performing districts, after the end of the grant period. Provide strategies for sharing information about the project results or for replicating the project in other areas.

### **Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals**

Proposals will be selected on a competitive review process conducted by an expert panel of reviewers. Proposals will be scored according to the criteria outlined below and ranked by score. The total number of points possible is 100. Proposals will be considered ineligible if not submitted in the format set forth above or if incomplete. Final determination of funding will be made by the State Superintendent based upon the recommendations resulting from the review process.

- 1. **Proposed Project (30 points)**: The proposed plan for training and technical assistance (including coordination with the I-RtI Network), consistency and comprehensiveness of training and technical assistance, the number of IHEs to be served, and involvement of all stakeholders demonstrate a sound approach to carrying out the project. Of great

importance is the extent to which the overall plan has a strong likelihood of fulfilling the Program Specifications of the RFP.

- 2. Project Action Plan (25 points):** The key tasks are clearly delineated for the SPDG Project objectives, and the proposed activities (project actions) and timelines are reasonable and clearly linked to the stated objectives and key tasks, providing a coherent and logical work plan to support the accomplishment of the overarching project goal stated herein. The sequence of relationships of major activities is clearly defined, and the activities have a strong likelihood of fulfilling the Program Specifications of the RFP.
- 3. Evaluation (20 points):** The proposed procedures for meeting the evaluation requirements are appropriate and will result in determining the extent to which the stated objective(s) and activities have been accomplished during project implementation. The evaluation procedures are sufficient in order to determine the effectiveness of the project in such a way that information can be used to inform future planning to improve practice by ascertaining the impact of the outcomes for IHE faculty and educator preparation program students, in addition to general trends.
- 4. Grantee Capability (10 points):** The applicant demonstrates the capacity to implement a project of this magnitude and scope, including sufficient expertise in the professional development and technical assistance content and experience with similar projects; administrative, fiscal, and staff capabilities; and commitment for successful implementation of the proposed project within the established timeframe.
- 5. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (15 points):** The proposed budget is cost-effective and reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and expected outcomes; is of an amount that may realistically be expected to have an impact on the stated needs; and provides sufficient evidence that funds from the SPDG Project will supplement, rather than supplant, other local, state, and federal funding.

**Summary of I-ASPIRE Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) Checklist Results**

I-ASPIRE conducted a review of course syllabi from preservice and graduate programs (e.g., school psychology, special education, elementary education, school administration) at IHEs partnering in the project, as well as interviews with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) director at each participating institution. To conduct the syllabi review, an IHE checklist [see Appendix E of the RFP] was developed and subsequently used to evaluate the extent to which the IHE curricula include the problem-solving process, Rtl, and EIS content. The checklist consisted of five sections, as shown in Table A.

**Table A. Sections of the IHE Checklist**

Section 1:	Three-Tier Problem Solving and Response to Intervention
Section 2:	Universal Screening and Problem Identification
Section 3:	Scientifically Based Reading Instruction in a Three Tier Model
Section 4:	Scientifically Based Progress Monitoring Tools
Section 5:	Effective Problem Solving Teams

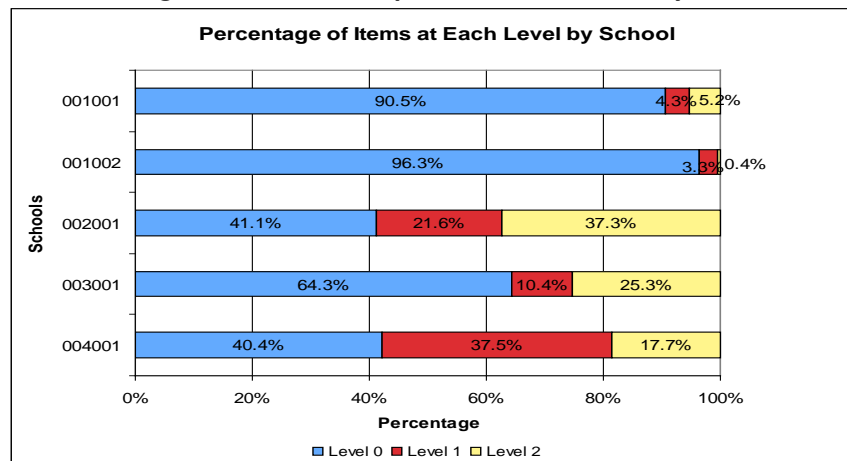
Syllabi ratings were based on the rating scale delineated Table B.

**Table B. Rating Scale for the IHE Checklist**

Rating	Meaning of Score
0	No evidence that the component is included in the class
1	Component is mentioned in the class
2	Component is mentioned in the class AND there are required readings, assignments, and/or projects for application

Five IHEs participated in this process, submitting 85 syllabi for review. Figure 1 displays the overall implementation level of each IHE. These data show that only two of the five IHEs (002001 and 004001) implemented components at a higher level than the other IHEs, although the majority of items were still at Levels 0 and 1. Overall, these data show relatively low levels of implementation of Rtl content in the participating IHEs.

**Figure 1. Overall Implementation Level, by IHE**



When analyzed for each of the five major sections of the IHE checklist, data showed that each item was implemented to some degree by all IHEs. While universities implemented content associated with the three-tiered problem-solving model and RtI section more often (22.5 percent of IHE programs at Levels 1 and 2) than the other sections, all five sections had more than 75 percent of the items at Level 0, indicating no evidence in course syllabi of a majority of the components involved in RtI.

A comparison was also made of syllabi by type of program (e.g., special education, school psychology, elementary education). School psychology programs, while having relatively low levels of implementation (58.8 percent of items at Level 0 and 28.4 percent at Level 2), were found to include components of RtI at a higher level in their instruction in comparison with other programs (e.g., special education, with 94.6 percent at Level 0 and 5.4 percent at Level 2).

Through interviews with NCATE directors it was also shown that the majority of programs expect students to obtain RtI content through their field placements (e.g., student teaching, internships), rather than through explicit coursework instruction. The interviewees could not, however, verify that field placements were actually selected so as to ensure the district or school had a system in place through which RtI practices were implemented.

Although the review of IHE syllabi involved a relatively small sample of IHE program coursework, the data illustrate a need to expand partnership activities with IHEs to conduct further program reviews and incorporate RtI content into preservice and graduate coursework.

### ISBE Professional Development Modules to Support Improved Student Performance

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has committed to providing professional development to school districts to assist in their implementation of a successful response to intervention (RtI) system for all students by the start of the 2010-11 school year. ISBE has used the results from school districts' self-assessments and district RtI plans to determine the types of state-level assistance the districts expect to need, with particular emphasis on the professional development necessary to implement this process. ISBE funded the design and development of 13 professional development modules as part of its ongoing responsibility to provide service and support to school districts to improve student performance, based on the information available.

#### **Module Components and Content**

Each module has the following components: Instructor Guide (including resources, annotated bibliography, web links and glossary); Participant Guide; Handouts; and PowerPoint slides.

1. **Overview and Use of Three-Tier Instruction and Intervention Model to Support Improved School Performance.** Based on the ISBE's RtI plan, this module provides an overview of RtI from an Illinois perspective. The module content includes the research base supporting the use of an RtI model and incorporate elements outlined in the ISBE plan (see [http://www.isbe.net/RtI\\_plan/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm)). The content of this module includes information regarding the use of a multi-tiered model, the processes necessary to use assessment data from both universal screeners and progress monitoring tools to make educational placement decisions, the considerations included in designing effective interventions for struggling students in kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12), and a thorough presentation of the collaborative nature of the work required in order to develop and implement a successful RtI system. Considerations for special education eligibility determination and the roles of parents, administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals are discussed. The need for research-based and evidence-based practices and definitions of each is delineated in the areas of curriculum selection, assessment selection, and instructional strategies.
2. **School Leadership for Improved School Performance.** Subtopics in this module include each of the following:
  - Establishing a shared vision and commitment for a standards-based common K-12 curriculum, to include identification of grade level/course benchmarks and content; creation of common formative assessments; selection of common summative assessments; leadership to determine appropriate universal screening and progress monitoring instruments for math and literacy at all grade levels; and determination of scientific research-based, high-quality instructional and intervention strategies.
  - Developing administrative leadership and support to respond to identified student needs, to monitor implementation of RtI policies, and to identify and focus school and district resources to support RtI.
  - Promoting teacher leadership as an effective model for collaboration and professional development.
  - Engaging family and community stakeholders in the planning process for implementing RtI.
  - Establishing collaborative procedures for school teams to respond to individual student needs based upon student assessment data and an individual student's response to instruction.

- Creating and maintaining a multi-tiered, standards-based assessment system to collect and analyze assessment data to measure both program effectiveness and individual student performance.
- Building a comprehensive professional development system providing multiple opportunities for educators to learn of the essential components of RtI – curriculum, assessment, and instructional strategies and interventions.

- 3. Parental Involvement for Improved Student Performance.** This module contains information regarding the role of parents in the RtI process. The resources of various parent advocacy groups are considered in designing the materials. Parent communication and involvement should be based upon a model that considers multiple mechanisms (one-way and two-way) to increase parental knowledge of RtI and increase a parent’s understanding of how data and assessment results are used in determining his or her child’s progress in mastering academic content. The role of parents on advisory councils, planning teams and in the special education eligibility determination process is delineated. Methods and strategies are noted for including parents in the RtI process and examples from successful school and district models, both elementary and secondary.
- 4. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners and Improved Student Performance.** This module focuses on the aspects of RtI unique to educating students who are English language learners (ELL). Content includes detailed descriptions of methods to select and effectively use universal screeners and progress monitoring instruments that will provide accurate and useful information in making determinations regarding the academic progress of non-native speakers in acquiring mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards, with a particular focus on mastery of English language arts and mathematics standards. The module discusses issues associated with avoiding over-identification of ELL students for special education services when using an RtI model of instruction. Research and best practices are included in the module to support the ability of an educator to design and implement RtI systems and procedures to support the academic achievement of all students.
- 5. Scientific, Research-Based Assessment for Improved Student Performance.** This module includes information regarding the Illinois’ three-tier RtI model and how the information gathered from universal screening data may be used to determine the quality of the school’s core curriculum and instructional program. RtI is presented as a program focused on prevention of learning difficulties through the systematic collection and use of student performance data to identify students at potential risk and provide early interventions based upon research-based instruction and high-quality curriculum designed to address skill deficiencies. The use of progress monitoring instruments to determine student response to structured interventions is a core principle which is addressed. Consideration is given to measuring progress against the peer-group as well as individual growth based upon the applied interventions and how use of this data is needed to determine if more intensive interventions are needed. The module provides information which will help schools and teachers make informed decisions regarding responsibility for administration of assessment instruments, including how to match local needs and resources when choosing universal screeners and progress monitoring tools. The module also contains information regarding how the assessment data gathered from progress monitoring and universal screening can be charted and interpreted to show growth of student learning and the rate of growth of student learning.
- 6. Data-Based Decision-Making.** This module presents the research basis to establish a need for data-based decision-making in an RtI system as outlined by the ISBE’s RtI plan. After establishing key definitions and rationales and demonstrating the historical research base supporting this type of

instructional approach to meeting student needs, the material describes different types of assessment data (formative and summative) which may be administered by educators to students and how the different types of data collected from these types of assessments may be used in a fully implemented RtI model. The module contains examples and case studies of methods of collecting, organizing, displaying and manipulating data to make it understandable to educators, parents and students. Of utmost importance are the descriptions of team collaborative decision-making processes and the use of multiple data points in determining appropriate educational interventions. The module includes information and activities to help participants fully understand the process for gathering high-quality data, understanding that data and using data to inform the instructional decisions.

- 7. Scientifically-based Instruction and Interventions.** This module contains a definition of and examples of scientifically-based instructional techniques and selection of appropriate interventions to support the learning of struggling K-12 students, with a particular focus on mathematics and literacy. Materials include references to the ISBE's RtI plan and its focus on the flexibility of tier placement for students based upon individual demonstrated and documented assessment data showing their responses to instructional interventions. Response to Intervention is explained in terms of both the pace of learning when compared to peers and mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards. The use of interventions is presented from a problem-solving model. Most importantly, information in this module provides clear criteria for educators to rely upon in the process of selecting appropriate instructional interventions. Supporting materials should include a bibliography of web-based and other print resources for school leaders to use when determining appropriate interventions for struggling students.
- 8. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Literacy (kindergarten through grade 3).** This module contains information to assist individual educators and teams of educators in designing and implementing literacy interventions for students who are struggling with acquisition of early literacy skills in kindergarten through grade 3. Content includes the basic tenets of differentiating instruction; consideration of classroom routines, organization, and management to support differentiated instruction; and the use of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and co-teaching models to support interventions. Attention is given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions.
- 9. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Literacy (grades 4 through 8).** This module contains information to assist individual educators and teams of educators in designing and implementing literacy interventions for students who are struggling with acquisition of literacy skills in grades 4 through 8. Content includes the basic tenets of differentiating instruction; consideration of classroom routines, organization, and management to support differentiated instruction; and the use of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and co-teaching models to support interventions. Attention must be given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions. Use of data to make flexible tier placement decisions should be emphasized. Material relating to evaluating, selecting, or designing progress monitoring instruments for students in grades 4 through 8 must be included.
- 10. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Literacy (grades 9 through 12).** This module focuses on the aspects of RtI unique to educators and students in high school. The module includes research-based information about assessment selection, data management and consideration of

the challenges faced by secondary educators addressing a student's difficulties in both skill acquisition and content acquisition. Information concerning instructional strategies, and scheduling and staffing considerations, is included. Attention is given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions. Use of data to make flexible tier placement decisions is emphasized. Material relating to evaluating, selecting, or designing progress monitoring instruments for students in grades 9 through 12, with a particular emphasis on literacy, is included. Examples or models of successful secondary school programs also should be included.

- 11. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Mathematics (kindergarten through grade 3).** This module contains information to assist individual educators and teams of educators in designing and implementing mathematics interventions for students who are struggling with acquisition of such early skills in kindergarten through grade 3. Content includes the basic tenets of differentiating instruction; consideration of classroom routines, organization, and management to support differentiated instruction; and the use of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and co-teaching models to support interventions. Attention is given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions. Use of data to make flexible tier placement decisions is emphasized. Material relating to evaluating, selecting, or designing early mathematics progress monitoring instruments to assist in determining and monitoring the effectiveness of early mathematics interventions should be included.
  
- 12. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Mathematics (grades 4 through 8).** This module contains information to assist individual educators and teams of educators in designing and implementing mathematics interventions for students who are struggling with acquisition of more advanced mathematics skills in grades 4 through 8. Content includes the basic tenets of differentiating instruction; consideration of classroom routines, organization, and management to support differentiated instruction; and the use of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and co-teaching models to support interventions. Attention is given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions. Use of data to make flexible tier placement decisions is emphasized. Material is included that relates to evaluating, selecting, or designing mathematics progress monitoring instruments to assist in determining and monitoring the effectiveness of mathematics interventions.
  
- 13. Determining and Designing Effective Interventions in Mathematics (grades 9 through 12).** This module focuses on the aspects of RtI unique to educators and students in high school. The module includes research-based information about assessment selection, data management and consideration of the challenges faced by secondary educators addressing a student's difficulties in both skill acquisition and content acquisition. Information concerning instructional strategies, scheduling and staffing considerations is included. Attention is given to establishing procedures and processes to match appropriate interventions to the individual student based upon his or her response to the selected interventions. Use of data to make flexible tier placement decisions is emphasized. Material relating to evaluating, selecting, or designing progress monitoring instruments for students in grades 9 through 12, with a particular emphasis on literacy and mathematics, is included. Examples or models of successful secondary school programs are included.

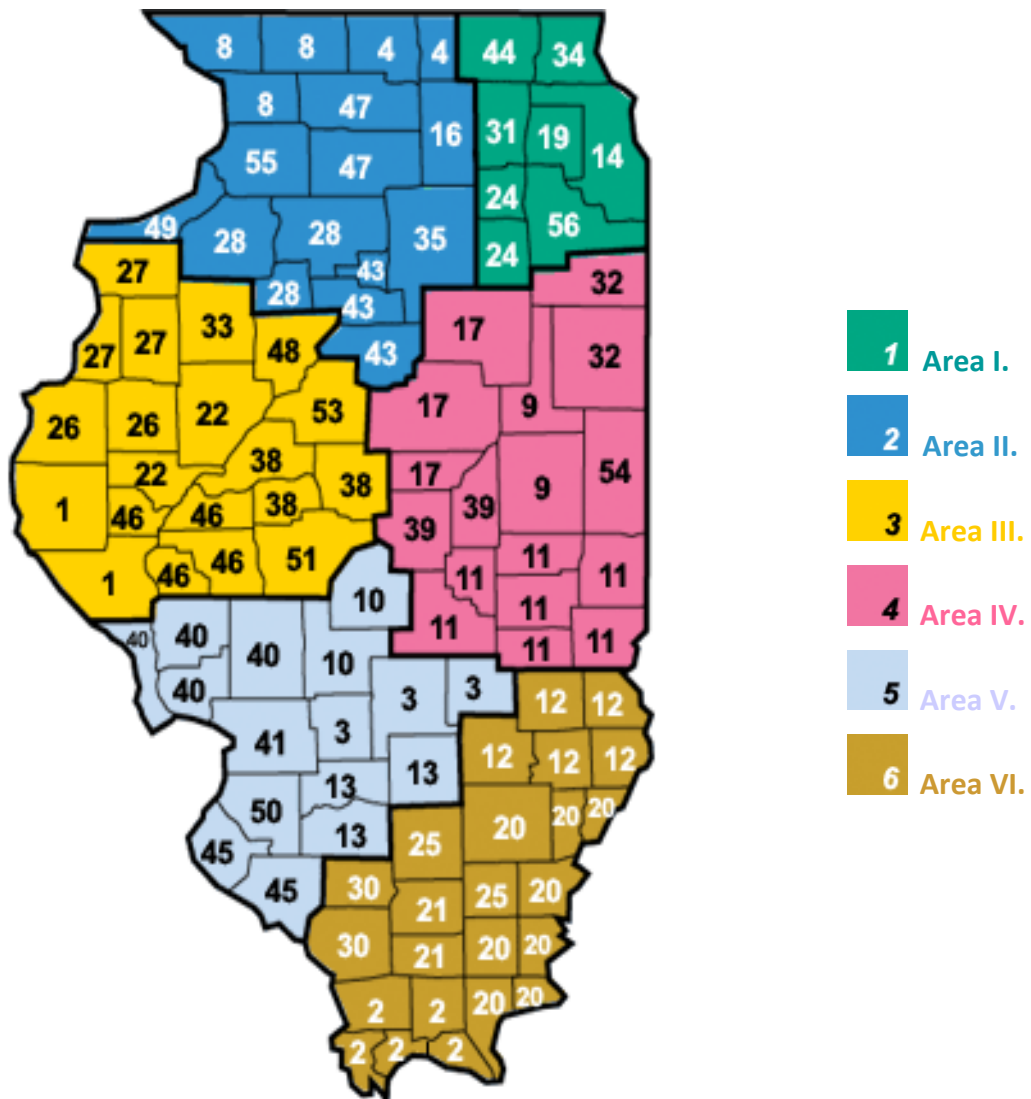
## **Training Process**

The modules are available for use as direct as well as for on-line self-paced learning.

**Direct Training.** These direct training opportunities should provide at least one day, and preferably longer than one day, of learning. The training intervals and process are designed appropriately for adult learning.

**On-line Self-paced Learning.** On-line courses are developed in an asynchronous environment and in a format to be self-led without instructor input. Frequent self-checks are built into the course modules to allow individuals to monitor their own progress. Additional learning resources and opportunities are built into the courses to serve as an opportunity for extended learning when individuals perform poorly on self-checks. The platform to be used for course delivery is the Illinois Virtual School (<http://www.ilvirtual.org/>). These on-line self-paced learning opportunities should provide at least two hours of content, and preferably longer than two hours. The training intervals and process are designed appropriately for high-quality adult learning.

Map of ROE Areas



**ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 2001**  
**Title IX—General Provisions, Part A—Definitions**

**Section 9101. Definitions.**

**(34) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** The term “professional development:”

- A. Includes activities that:
- i. Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;
  - ii. Are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
  - iii. Give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;
  - iv. Improve classroom management skills;
  - v. Are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom and are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;
  - vi. Support the recruiting, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
  - vii. Advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are:
    - (I) Based on scientifically based research (except that this subclause shall not apply to activities carried out under Part D of Title II); and
    - (II) Strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and
  - viii. Are aligned with and directly related to:
    - (I) State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and
    - (II) The curricula and programs tied to the standards described in subclause (a) [except that this subclause shall not apply to activities described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 2123(3)(B)];

- ix. Are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;
  - x. Are designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
  - xi. To the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers and principals in the use of technology so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and core academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
  - xii. As a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
  - xiii. Provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
  - xiv. Include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and
  - xv. Include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents; and
- B. May include activities that:
- i. Involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education to establish school-based teacher training programs that provide prospective teachers and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
  - ii. Create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under Part A of Title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
  - iii. Provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in subparagraph (A) or another clause of this subparagraph that is designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom.

*Note: The full text of the ESEA is available at <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/>.*

**NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NSDC)**  
**STANDARDS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT\***  
(Revised, 2001)

**Context Standards**

**Staff development that improves the learning of all students:**

- Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district. (Learning Communities)
- Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement. (Leadership)
- Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration. (Resources)

**Process Standards**

**Staff development that improves the learning of all students:**

- Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement. (Data-Driven)
- Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact. (Evaluation)
- Prepares educators to apply research to decision-making. (Research-Based)
- Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal. (Design)
- Applies knowledge about human learning and change. (Learning)
- Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate. (Collaboration)

**Content Standards**

**Staff development that improves the learning of all students:**

- Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement. (Equity)
- Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately. (Quality Teaching)
- Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately. (Family Involvement)

\*Additional information related to these standards is available on the NSDC website at <http://www.learningforward.org/standards/index.cfm>.

**IL ASPIRE INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION CHECKLIST (V1.1)**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

**Purpose**

As part of the Illinois ASPIRE project, the Institute of Higher Education (IHE) Checklist is designed to assess the amount of professional development content incorporated into IHE general and special education pre-service curricula.

Points of interest are: (1) education preparation and (2) graduate programs that have pre-service curricula that address knowledge and skills required to implement school-based problem solving, including (3) designing and implementing early intervening services.

**Steps for Administration**

- The ASPIRE staff meets with the contact person for an IHE in the department of interest.
- The IHE representative collects 2-3 syllabi for the courses that contain pre-service curricula that most directly address knowledge and skills required to implement school-based problem solving, including designing and implementing early intervening services.
- The ASPIRE staff reviews the syllabi and rates them on the attached checklist.
- The ASPIRE staff contacts the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) director to conduct a follow-up interview.
- If the NCATE director can answer the ASPIRE staff questions, the interview can stop there. If additional information is needed, then the instructor of record can be contacted.
- If the initial contact can not answer the questions, request another instructor (“snowball sampling”).
- Provide the interviewee with a copy of the tool in advance.

**Timeline for administration**

Information on exact dates is available at the IL-ASPIRE Program Coordinators Page which is linked from the CSEIT ASPIRE webpage at <http://www.luc.edu/cseit/aspire.shtml>.

**Administration Instructions**

The regional ASPIRE staff completes the checklist for each syllabus provided by the IHE representative. For each of the items in the IHE checklist, the ASPIRE staff indicates the level of implementation demonstrated in the course syllabus.

After completing the syllabus review, the ASPIRE staff contacts the NCATE director to conduct a follow-up interview. Interview questions are provided on the last page of the checklist form. The ASPIRE staff records responses to the interview questions in the space provided.

Deadlines are available at the IL-ASPIRE Program Coordinators Page, which is linked from the CSEIT ASPIRE webpage at <http://www.luc.edu/cseit/aspire.shtml>.

**IL ASPIRE INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION CHECKLIST (V1.1)**

**\*To be completed by the ASPIRE Regional Evaluation Coordinator \***

School or department:

Contact Person:

- Administration (graduate)
- General Education (undergraduate)
- Special Education (undergraduate)
- School Psychology (graduate)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

- Undergraduate Coordinator
- Graduate Coordinator
- College/School Dean
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Level of Implementation**

0 = No evidence that the component is included in the class

1 = Component is mentioned in the class

2 = Component is mentioned in the class AND required readings, assignments, and/or projects for application

**Please indicate the extent to which each syllabus provides evidence of implementation of the following components as part of the curriculum:**

**Training Content:**

<b>1. Three Tier Problem Solving and Response to Intervention</b>		<b>Syllabus 1 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 2 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 3 (0, 1, or 2)</b>
1.1	Overview of problem solving in a 3 Tier Prevention Model is provided.			
1.2	Response to Intervention is discussed as a means of meeting NCLB and IDEA requirements.			
1.3	Critical components of the problem-solving model are defined (e.g., identify objective, measurable problem; problem analysis and planning for implementation; utilizing scientifically based instruction/intervention; utilizing scientifically based progress monitoring).			
<b>2. Universal Screening and Problem Identification</b>		<b>Syllabus 1 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 2 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 3 (0, 1, or 2)</b>
2.1	Definition of "Universal Screening," "Problem Identification," and "Benchmarking"			
2.2	Definition and measurement of "Educational Need" (Performance Discrepancies) and "Educational Benefit" (Rate of Improvement)			
2.3	Definition and use of norms and standards for problem identification			

<b>3. Scientifically Based Reading Instruction in a Three Tier Model</b>		<b>Syllabus 1 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 2 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 3 (0, 1, or 2)</b>
3.1	Description of the National Reading Panel five big ideas in reading			
3.2	Problem Analysis of curriculum, environment, instruction, and student			
3.3	Intervention selection based on match with instructional needs			
<b>4. Scientifically Based Progress Monitoring Tools</b>		<b>Syllabus 1 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 2 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 3 (0, 1, or 2)</b>
4.1	Overview of critical features of scientifically based progress monitoring tools (reliable, valid, sensitive to change, multiple equivalent probes)			
4.2	Administration and scoring of curriculum-based measures (CBM)			
4.3	Frequency of progress monitoring at each tier			
4.4	Overview of progress monitoring decision-rules (e.g., meeting benchmarks/standards, realistic/ambitious goals, making instructional changes, increasing/decreasing intensity of instruction)			
<b>5. Effective Problem-Solving Teams</b>		<b>Syllabus 1 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 2 (0, 1, or 2)</b>	<b>Syllabus 3 (0, 1, or 2)</b>
5.1	How to incorporate problem solving into teams (leadership, grade level collaboration, cross-disciplinary intensive teams)			
5.2	Roles, function, membership for effective teaming			
5.3	Critical components of effective teams (purpose, agenda, effective use of time, member roles, minutes)			
5.4	Leadership strategies to support system change			

**Reviewer's Notes:**

**Follow-up Interview**

Instructions: After reviewing the 2-3 syllabi provided, contact the IHE representative, ask the following questions, and record the responses. You may also ask additional questions to provide further clarification based on the syllabus review.

1. How does your program prepare pre-service students to participate in three-tier problem-solving models and Response to Intervention?
2. How does your program prepare pre-service students to participate in universal screening and problem identification as part of this model?
3. How does your program prepare pre-service students to implement scientifically-based reading instruction as part of this model?
4. How does your program prepare pre-service students to implement scientifically based progress monitoring in a three-tier model?
5. How does your program prepare pre-service students to participate in effective problem-solving teams?
6. *(optional question)* \_\_\_\_\_
7. *(optional question)* \_\_\_\_\_

### SPDG Project Evaluation Plan

An external evaluator will implement the proposed evaluation plan (see table below) annually. Participating Illinois RtI Network districts and schools will provide data online to the project evaluator. The evaluator will provide aggregate reports to the RtI Network to use for program evaluation and strategic planning. Student, school (building), and district data will be collected by the project coordinator, regional coordinators, external coaches, districts, and schools for analysis and reporting. Additionally, ISBE will provide extant data (e.g., state assessment, EE, and LRE data) to the external project evaluator for the purpose of analysis. The evaluator will summarize and analyze project data across all participating regions/districts/ schools

The external project evaluator will coordinate and assume responsibility for all project evaluation components, and specifically will be required to:

- Refine existing and/or develop additional project evaluation instruments [existing instruments available at <http://www.luc.edu/cseit/i-aspireresourcesforcoordinator.shtml>]. This work will involve collaboration with staff of the Problem Solving and RtI Project at the USF.
- Refine existing and/or develop effective and efficient data reporting mechanisms to be used by the project, aligned with, where appropriate, existing ISBE data collection systems. Emphasis will be placed on accessing student level state assessment data or their equivalent for contextualizing impact data.
- Publish a standardized school district evaluation plan that matches the activities for use by the project.
- Provide data collection and reporting technical assistance to the Illinois RtI Network staff, external coaches, and participating districts and to the Illinois IHE Partnership participants.
- Complete annual reports to be reviewed by ISBE, ISAC, and the RtI Stakeholder Group.
- Attend ISAC and RtI Stakeholder Group meetings to provide project evaluation updates.
- Work with Illinois RtI Network staff, participating districts and schools, IHEs, and parents on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding (a) systematic training and support of external coaches, (b) IHEs' integration of RtI into their curriculum and field placements, and (c) the effects of implementation of the RtI process.

The Illinois RtI Network evaluation coordinator, along with the project coordinator and regional coordinators, will be required to:

- Work with the project evaluator and project coordinator on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding (a) systematic training and support of external coaches, (b) training and coaching services delivered by external coaches, and (c) the effects of implementation of the RtI process.
- Collaborate with the project evaluator to establish the data collection system and the Illinois RtI Network site participants to implement the data collection system.
- Provide technical assistance to external coaches, and when needed, districts and school sites, on the data collection system.
- Coordinate data collection efforts in the Illinois RtI Network regions and selected nonparticipating network schools in their region for comparison purposes.

- Keep the project evaluator informed of any challenges to the data collection efforts so that technical assistance can be provided.

Staff of the IHEs participating in the Illinois IHE Partnership will be required to work with the project evaluator on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding IHEs' integration of RtI content and competencies into their curriculum and field placements.

There are four levels of performance resulting from the professional development, technical assistance, and coaching delivered through the project: 1) implementation, 2) fidelity, 3) sustainability, and 4) impact on outcomes. Therefore, evaluation efforts focus on addressing the following questions:

1. *If people are trained, do they implement?*
2. *If people implement, do they implement with fidelity?*
3. *If people implement with fidelity, do they sustain the practice(s)?*
4. *If people sustain the practice(s), what is the impact on student outcomes (school, group, individual)?*

#### **Evaluation Plan to Assess Project Outcomes**

**Project Goal: Scale up implementation of a coordinated, statewide system of personnel development that will increase the capacity of school systems to establish and utilize a multi-tiered model of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment to improve the progress and performance of all students, including those with disabilities.**

*Objective 1: Deliver research-based professional development, technical assistance, and coaching to increase the number of general and special education administrators, teachers, and other personnel and parents who understand and implement a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention and assessment, resulting in improved student performance.*

**Evaluation Questions:**

**1) *If people are trained, do they implement?***

- To what degree is the RtI Network delivering the training and technical assistance to the regional coordinators and external coaches as proposed in the project?
- To what degree are the regional coordinators and external coaches providing training and technical assistance to districts and building level staff including internal coaches?
- To what degree are strategies/methods that are trained and coached by regional coordinators and external coaches as part of the project actually implemented at the district/building/classroom/student levels?

**2) *If people implement, do they implement with fidelity?***

- To what degree are the training and coaching provided by regional coordinators and external coaches being delivered with fidelity?
- To what degree are strategies/methods that are trained and coached by regional coordinators and external coaches as part of the project actually implemented with fidelity at the district/building/classroom/student levels?

**3) *If people implement with fidelity, do they sustain the practice(s)?***

- To what degree are the training and coaching provided by regional coordinators and external coaches being delivered with fidelity over time?

- To what degree are strategies/methods that are trained and coached by regional coordinators and external coaches as part of the project actually implemented with fidelity over time at the district/building/classroom/student levels?

**4) *If people sustain the practice(s), what is the impact on student outcomes (school, group, individual)?***

- Do increased knowledge and skills of regional coordinators, external coaches, and building personnel lead to improved school performance, as measured by:
  - State assessment and CBM results in reading and math?
  - Increasing attendance and decreased grade retention and suspension/expulsion rates?
- Do increased knowledge and skills of the regional coordinators and external coaches and building personnel lead to:
  - An increased percentage of students with disabilities placed in the LRE?
  - A reduction in the disproportionality of racial/ethnic minorities and students from low income backgrounds in special education referral and placement rates?
  - An increased percentage of students exiting special education?

**Data Sources:**

- 1) Training and Technical Assistance (TA) Logs and Data Protocol
  - a. Each regional coordinator and external coach will track the number of training sessions given and the number and type of participants. Participants will complete an ISBE training evaluation form for each training session attended, including an assessment of the degree of alignment with state teaching standards.
  - b. Each regional coordinator and external coach will track the number and types of technical assistance they provide and to whom.
  - c. Using a Data Protocol each external coach will track the number and type of coaching and technical assistance supports they provide to district and building level teams. Using a Data Protocol each district and building level team(s) receiving this coaching and technical assistance supports will complete satisfaction and monitoring surveys regarding the supports they receive.
- 2) The Self Assessment of Problem Solving in Schools (SAPSI)
  - a. The SAPSI monitors treatment integrity during coaching/training and verifies fidelity of implementation. It reflects observable critical components for all aspects of the critical skills/methods taught as part of the project.
  - b. The SAPSI will be completed by each Illinois RtI network school at least once per year.
- 3) Fidelity Checklist
  - a. The Fidelity Checklist is designed to monitor the adherence of implementation of RtI activities and products at the school level. This tool allows external evaluation of the implementation of RtI activities by providing a guideline to product review as a means of triangulating the self-reported implementation data from the SAPSI.
  - b. It is intended that the Fidelity Checklist will provide reliable and valid data regarding the implementation of the problem-solving and RtI processes.
- 4) Student Performance and Progress
  - a. CBM data in reading and math will be used to assess individual student reading and math outcomes. As part of the project, all participating elementary schools will be expected to universally screen students using CBM probes at least three times per year.

At the middle and high school levels, CBMs will also be used, along with other screening tools appropriate for these grade levels.

- b. All of these data will be extracted from district electronic files to the extent possible (using an Internet-based data management system).
- c. While there are initial correlations between ISAT and CBM data, this project will expand the sampling process for creating Illinois norms by looking at the predictive validity of CBM data on student ISAT data.
- d. All standardized accountability assessments in reading and math (ISAT and PSAE) given by Illinois school districts will be used as student outcome measures at grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. Student level ISAT and PSAE outcome measures will be available in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The percentages of students meeting reading and math *Illinois Learning Standards*, as measured by ISAT and PSAE, will be used to determine project impact at the district, regional, and statewide levels, to the extent possible.

5) School Records

- i. School records for Illinois RtI Network participating schools will be reviewed to determine individual, building, district, regional, and statewide effects of the project based on such variables as attendance, suspension/expulsion, and retention rates.
- ii. These data are publicly available via School Report Card files from ISBE.
- iii. These data will be analyzed annually for participating schools. To the degree possible, pre/post-measures will be assessed for changes associated with project implementation.
- iv. These data will also be disaggregated by at-risk groups (including from low income backgrounds), to the extent possible, and included as part of the evaluation.

6) ISBE Child Count Data

These data for participating Illinois RtI Network schools and data from LEA profiles at the district level will be aggregated within regions, and subsequently statewide, to determine the level of LRE for students with disabilities who are receiving special education services.

7) ISBE Report Card Data.

Data from school and district report cards will be reviewed to determine the race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender composition of the overall school district population of the participating Illinois RtI Network schools. Building and district records will also be reviewed to determine the race/ethnicity, disability category, gender, and socioeconomic status of students referred for and placed in special education.

Timelines:

- 1) Data collection from Training and T.A. logs will be ongoing and summarized semiannually. The Data Protocol will be completed once per year by the external coaches and building level teams to determine fidelity and sustainability of the technical assistance process.
- 2) Regional coordinators and external coaches will use the SAPSI in fall of Year 1 to determine the baseline status of all project components and then at least annually each spring thereafter to assess change over time.
- 3) In spring of each project year, implementation status will be determined for all project components by using the Fidelity Checklist. This checklist will be completed by regional coordinators and external coaches or their district-level designee using the approved sampling strategy to directly assess the degree to which the project model components have been implemented to determine treatment integrity.

- 4) A baseline will be determined for reading and math and/or the state assessment in Year 1 at appropriate grade levels and then will be collected and summarized annually. Ongoing CBM data in reading and math will be collected and summarized annually.
- 5) Attendance, suspension/expulsion, graduation/drop-out, and retention rates will be collected annually.
- 6) A baseline for LRE placement will be determined during Year 1 and then collected and summarized annually.
- 7) Baseline rates for various racial/ethnic, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability subgroups will be collected for referral, placement, and exiting for special education. Data will then be collected and summarized.

***Objective 2:*** Increase the number of parents who participate and their level of participation in the educational decision-making process for their child across district sites.

**Evaluation Question:**

**1) *If people are trained, do they implement?***

- Does the training provided by the PTIs and/or the Rtl Network increase parent awareness and understanding of Rtl?
- Does the implementation of the skills and methods related to this project lead to increased numbers of parents who participate and their levels of participation in the Rtl process?

**Data Sources:**

- 1) Number of parents participating in training sequences and completed evaluation forms.
- 2) As a part of the Fidelity Checklist, a specific subcomponent addresses the level of parent participation in district or building level training.
- 3) The Parent Participation Survey will be completed at least once per year by parents involved in Tier 3 individual student problem-solving meetings and/or IEP meetings in Illinois Rtl Network schools.

**Timelines:**

- 1) Attendance at training will be assessed throughout the timeline of the training portion of the project.
- 2) During Year 1 and in subsequent years, randomly selected participating schools will be reviewed using the Fidelity Checklist to determine the level of parental involvement in training activities.
- 3) During Year 1, a baseline of parent participation at problem-solving and IEP meetings for demonstration sites will be determined using the Parent Participation Survey. Parent participation rates then will be collected and summarized annually.

***Objective 3:*** Increase the number of IHE undergraduate and graduate educator preparation programs that implement Rtl content in their curricula and field placements.

**Evaluation Question:**

**1) *If people are trained, do they implement?***

- To what degree is the IHE Partnership, in collaboration with the Rtl Network, delivering training and technical assistance to IHE faculty as proposed in the project?
- To what degree are higher education preservice training programs incorporating the skills/methods that are part of this project into their curricula?
- To what degree are pre-service field placement sites selected based on high levels of

fidelity of implementation of RtI?

- To what degree are highly qualified graduates of pre-service programs employed by districts with high populations of students from low income backgrounds?

Data Sources:

- 1) IHE Checklist: The purpose of this tool is to evaluate the extent to which the IHE curricula include RtI content.
- 2) National Association of State Directors of Special Education IHE Blueprint
- 3) The number of IHEs that have an identified process for selecting field placements that align with the training objectives of this project.
- 4) Reviews of the match for employment of teacher candidate graduates into high needs districts using available data from IHEs and ISBE.

Timeline:

Training attendance will be assessed throughout the project and summarized semiannually.

*Objective 4: Refine and implement a comprehensive evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of project activities.*

Evaluation Questions:

- 1) To what degree do research-based professional development, technical assistance, and coaching increase the number of general and special education administrators, teachers, and other personnel and parents who understand and implement a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention, and assessment, resulting in improved student performance?

Data Sources:

All data sources from the first three objectives will inform the evaluation of this objective.

Timeline:

Evaluation data will be reviewed semiannually (via reports to ISAC and the RtI Stake-holder Group), annually (via the project evaluation and OSEP Performance reports), and at project end.