

Response to Intervention and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support in Senate Enrolled Act 217

Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 217 references Response to Intervention (RTI) several times throughout the legislation. It is stated in the following sections:

Chapter 1 Section 6 subsection 2: Reading specialist trained in dyslexia shall be fluent in the response to intervention process.

Chapter 2 Section 7: If a universal screener, level I dyslexia screening, or level II screening indicates that a student has characteristics of dyslexia, the school corporation or charter school shall use the response to intervention process to address the needs of student.

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has two documents that also reference RTI as it pertains to Senate Enrolled Act 217. The “Dyslexia Screener Flowchart” references chapter 2 section 7 of the law (see above for complete language) which states schools shall use the RTI process to address students’ needs in area(s) below benchmark on any screener. The box also lists recommended instructional approaches including systematic, explicit, sequential, cumulative, and multisensory instruction for struggling readers used during the tiered support of RTI. The flowchart also lists possible techniques to reach students through tiered support (e.g. number of students in the intervention, length and number of interventions, and scope of study.) The document can be found [here](#).

The second document referencing RTI is the “Senate Enrolled Act 217 and Article 7 and IDEA”. This document was created to help schools understand the parallels between SEA 217, a general education law, and Article 7 and IDEA, special education laws. The documents also detail how these laws could potentially intersect when a student qualifies for special education. The document can be found [here](#).

The Indiana Department of Education’s Office of School Improvement understands that Senate Enrolled Act 217 states schools will use Response to Intervention (RTI) while the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) law requires schools use a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process to comply with Federal legislation. When we refer to RTI, as the law states, we understand that RTI is one part of the MTSS framework supporting the whole child. We encourage schools to embrace MTSS.

These two frameworks are different. The MTSS framework is an umbrella term that collects data and works to improve every student by encompassing the “whole child” (the term whole child means a child’s behavior, academic, and social-emotional levels) while RTI traditionally focuses on the academic progress of struggling students with separate systems for supporting positive behavior and social-emotional well-being are also implemented.

It is important to note that both RTI and MTSS use a framework for identifying and using data to identify students needing support. Both frameworks then have schools implement research-based interventions to address the students’ area(s) of needs. Additionally, both frameworks use progress monitoring to evaluate a student’s progress and tier placement, and keeps stakeholders aware of the student’s growth.

Please see the diagram below for a visual representation of how RTI and MTSS frameworks both support student success.

