

Making Connections: Self-Evaluation of Tier 3 Intervention System

Directions: Read the descriptors in each column. Individually or with your team, determine which descriptor best describes your current Tier 3 system.


Criteria	1	3	5
Data-Based Interventions Adapted Based on Student Need	Intensive interventions are not more intensive (e.g., no increase in duration or frequency, change in interventionist, change in group size, or change in intervention) than Tier 2 supplemental secondary interventions.	Intensive interventions are more intensive than Tier 2 supplemental secondary interventions, but decisions are based only on preset methods to increase intensity (e.g., sole reliance on increased duration or frequency, change in interventionist, decreased group size, or change in intervention program).	Intensive interventions are more intensive than Tier 2 supplemental secondary interventions and are adapted to address individual student needs in a number of ways (e.g., increased duration or frequency, change in interventionist, decreased group size, change in instructional delivery, and change in type of intervention) through an iterative manner based on student data.
Instructional Characteristics	None of the following conditions is met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.	Only one or two of the following conditions is met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students. What about 2 conditions met?	All of the following conditions are met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.
Relationship to Tier 1 Core Programming	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core instruction	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core instruction and

	instruction and intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions are aligned to the specific skill needs of students to help them make progress toward core curriculum standards.	and intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions address the general education curriculum in an appropriate manner for students.	intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions address the general education curriculum in an appropriate manner for students.
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Comparing Tiers 2 and 3 (Academic Illustration)

Characteristics	Tier 2	Tier 3
Instruction/ Intervention Approach	Follow standardized evidence-based intervention programs as designed	Use standardized evidence-based program as a platform, but adapt instruction based on student data
Duration and timeframe	Use duration and timeframe defined by developer	Increase frequency and/or duration to meet student needs
Group size	3–7 students (as defined by developer)	Decrease group size to meet individual student needs (no more than 3)
Progress Monitoring	At least monthly	Weekly
Population served	At-risk (typically 15–20% of student population)	Significant and persistent learning and/or behavior needs (typically 3–5% of student population)





Data-based individualization (DBI) is a research-based process for individualizing and intensifying interventions for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs. The process integrates evidence-based intervention, assessment, and strategies using 5 interactive steps:



STEP 1 | Validated Intervention Program: The Foundation

The DBI process builds on an evidence-based and standardized intervention delivered with fidelity. At this step, teachers consider:


▪ Does the intervention target the student’s academic and behavioral needs?

▪ Is the intervention based on the best available evidence?

▪ Does the intervention align with core instruction?

▪ Has the intervention been shown to work with most students?

▪ Are procedures in place to ensure the intervention is delivered as planned?



STEP 2 | Progress Monitor: Did the Intervention Work?

At this step, staff regularly collect and analyze progress monitoring data to determine *if* the student is responding to the validated intervention. Teachers consider:


▪ Does the tool meet technical standards for progress monitoring and match the desired academic or behavioral outcome?

▪ Were data collected regularly and with a consistent approach?

▪ Were progress data graphed?

▪ Was the goal set using a validated approach?


▪ Was the intervention effective for most students?




ANALYZING DATA

Do data indicate that the intervention is working?

 If no, **move to Step 3.**

 If yes, **move back to Step 1** and continue to provide the validated intervention and monitor progress.




STEP 3 | Diagnostic Data: Why Didn’t the Intervention Work?

At this step, staff use diagnostic data to develop a hypothesis about *why* the student is struggling. Teachers consider:

▪ Do multiple data sources confirm slow progress?

▪ Have both academic and behavioral explanations been considered?

▪ What do these data suggest about what needs to changed?



STEP 4 | Intervention Adaptation: What Change Is Needed?


The hypothesis, along with educator expertise, is used to develop an individual student plan for modifying or adapting the intervention to better meet the student’s individual needs. Teachers consider:

▪ Does the adaptation address the hypothesis?

▪ Does the plan address both academic and behavioral concerns when needed?

▪ Are procedures in place for implementing and monitoring the adapted intervention?

▪ Are only a few adaptations made at one time?



STEP 5 | Progress Monitor: Did the Change Work?

Continue to collect, graph, and analyze progress monitoring data to determine if the student is responding to the adapted intervention. Teachers consider:


▪ Are data collected according to the plan?


▪ Does the graph indicate when adaptations were made?



ANALYZING DATA

Do data indicate that the intervention is working?

 If no, **return to Step 3.**

 If yes, **return to Step 5** and continue to provide the adapted intervention and progress monitor.

This document was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Grant No. HH326Q160001. Celia Rosenquist is the OSEP project officer. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. Although permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: National Center on Intensive Intervention. (2018). *Breaking down the DBI process: Questions & considerations*. Washington, DC: Author, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.



The *Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity** was developed based on existing research to support educators in evaluating and building intervention intensity.



Dimensions*	Description
Strength	How well the program works for students with intensive intervention needs, expressed in terms of effect sizes. Effect sizes of above .25 indicate an intervention has value in improving outcomes. Effect sizes of 0.35 to 0.40 are moderate; effect sizes of 0.50 or larger are strong (preferred).
Dosage	The number of opportunities a student has to respond and receive corrective feedback. It refers to the size of the instructional group, the number of minutes each session lasts, and the number of sessions provided per week.
Alignment	How well the program (a) addresses the target student's full set of academic skill deficits, (b) does <i>not</i> address skills the target student has already mastered (extraneous skills for that student), and (c) incorporates a meaningful focus on grade-appropriate curricular standards.
Attention to transfer	The extent to which an intervention is designed to help students (a) transfer the skills they learn to other formats and contexts and (b) realize connections between mastered and related skills.
Comprehensiveness	The number of explicit instruction principles the intervention incorporates (e.g., providing explanations in simple, direct language; modeling efficient solution strategies instead of expecting students to discover strategies on their own; providing practice so students use the strategies to generate many correct responses; and incorporating systematic cumulative review).
Behavioral support	The extent to which the program incorporates (a) self-regulation and executive function components and (b) behavioral principles to minimize nonproductive behavior.
Individualization	A validated, data-based process for individualizing intervention, in which the educator systematically adjusts the intervention over time, in response to ongoing progress monitoring data, to address the student's complex learning needs.



*Fuchs, L.S, Fuchs, D. & Malone, A.S. (2017). The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 35–43.

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Dimensions*	Description
Strength	How well the program works for students with intensive intervention needs, sometimes expressed as a promising or effective program by a reliable source (e.g., NCII Tools Charts, WWC).
Dosage	The number of opportunities a student has to (a) respond (i.e., practice/demonstrate skill), (b) receive positive feedback (e.g., praise, tokens, points), (c) exchange for backup reinforcers, and (d) receive corrective feedback.
Alignment	How well the program (a) addresses school-wide expectations, (b) addresses classroom/teacher expectations, (c) addresses student's skill deficits, (d) matches rewards to student's preferences and/or function of problem behavior, and (e) does not address extraneous skills.
Attention to transfer	The extent to which an intervention emphasizes how and when a student uses skills across contexts/situations and includes opportunities to practice using skills across context/situations. The program reinforces the use of skills across contexts/situations.
Comprehensiveness	The extent to which the intervention includes a plan for (a) teaching appropriate behavior, (b) adjusting antecedent conditions to prevent problem behavior, (c) reinforcing appropriate behavior, (d) minimizing reinforcement for problem behavior, (e) fading supports (and supports can be easily faded), (f) monitoring fidelity, (g) working in conjunction with related services, and (h) communicating with parents.
Academic support	The extent to which the program (a) can be easily integrated within context of academic instruction, (b) complements rather than supplants academic focus, and (c) includes procedures for reinforcing responses related to academic achievement (e.g., engagement, work completion).
Individualization	A validated, data-based process for individualizing intervention, in which the educator systematically adjusts the intervention over time, in response to ongoing progress monitoring, to address the student's complex learning needs.



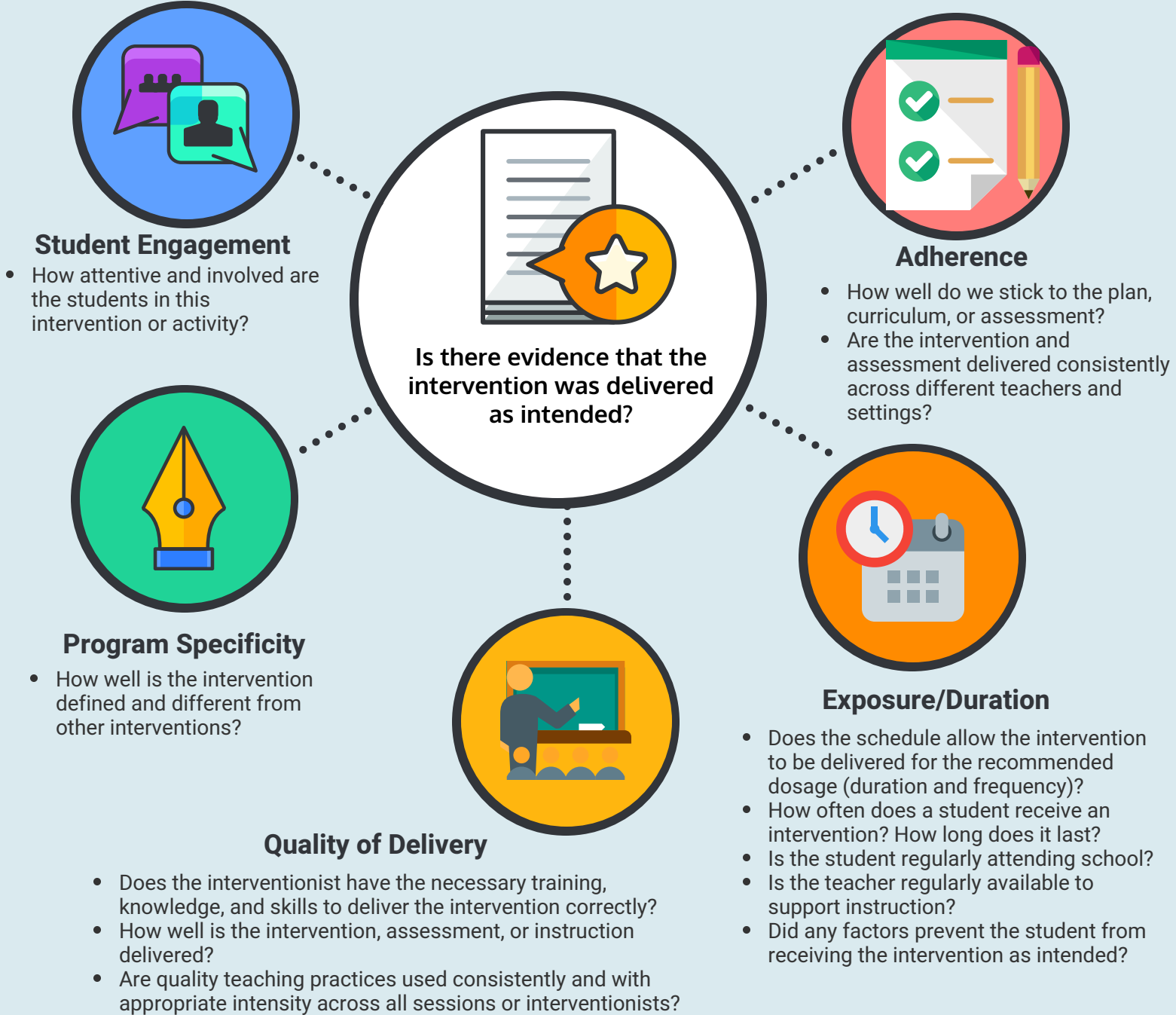
*Adapted from Fuchs, L.S, Fuchs, D. & Malone, A.S. (2017). The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 35–43.

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Considerations for Effective Implementation

5 Elements of Fidelity



Why fidelity? If we don't implement critical components of an intervention with consistency, we cannot link student outcomes to the instruction provided. Fidelity can help us to determine the effectiveness of an intervention, and identify if a student requires more intensive supports.

Source: Dane and Schneider (1998); Gresham, Gansle, and Noell (1993); O'Donnell (2008).

References

Dane, A. V., & Schneider, B. H. (1998). Program integrity in primary and early secondary prevention: Are implementation effects out of control? *Clinical Psychology Review, 18*, 23–45.

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This document was produced under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Award No. H326Q160001. Celia Rosenquist serves as the project officer. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this document is intended or should be inferred. Find additional information at www.intensiveintervention.org.

Ask Clarifying Questions to Create a Hypothesis to Guide Intervention Changes

Question Bank

Purpose: The team should ask clarifying questions in order to analyze the data and develop a hypothesis to guide future intervention planning (e.g., skill deficit, function of behavior). The following questions may be used to help prompt discussion with your team. They are divided by areas of consideration outlined in the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity.

Intervention Design and Delivery (*strength and fidelity*)

- Was the validated intervention evidence-based?
- Does evidence suggest the intervention is expected to lead to improved outcomes for a student with similar needs?
- Was the intervention delivered with fidelity? Consider:
 - Adherence: How well do we stick to the plan, curriculum, or assessment?
 - Program specificity: How well is the intervention defined and different from other interventions?
- Did any factors prevent the student from receiving the intervention as intended?

Learner Needs and Background

- Is the student an English language learner? Are appropriate practices to support language development used?
- Is the student regularly attending school? Intervention?
- What previous interventions or supports has the student received? How has he/she responded to these interventions or supports?
- Has the teacher communicated with previous teachers, parents, or the student to get a better sense of his/her performance?
- For students with an identified disability, consider the following
 - Does the student have an IEP or 504 plan?
 - Is the student receiving appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or supplementary aids and services?
 - Does the student require accommodations, modifications, assistive technology and/or supplementary aids and services to benefit from the intervention?
- For students without an identified disability, consider the following
 - Does the data warrant a referral to special education, given the district's policies?

Dosage (*opportunities to practice and receive corrective feedback*)

- Did the students receive sufficient exposure to the intervention? How often does a student receive an intervention? How long does an intervention last? How frequently and by whom was it delivered? Did the student receive a validated intervention?
- Does the group size, duration, and frequency provide sufficient opportunities to respond or receive correct feedback?
- Does the student have sufficient opportunities to practice the taught skill or receive corrective feedback?

Alignment

- Was the validated intervention an appropriate fit for the student, given the identified skill deficits and/or function of behavior?
- Does the current intervention reflect evidence-based practices aligned with the student's identified skill deficit or function of behavior?

Attention to Transfer (*generalization of skills*)

- Does the data suggest the student is making progress in the intervention, but not transferring the skills to other settings (e.g., core instruction, other content areas, other settings)?

Comprehensiveness (*elements of explicit instruction*)

- How well is the intervention, assessment, or instruction delivered?
- Does the intervention include elements of explicit instruction?

Behavior Supports and Factors

- Does the student have opportunities to develop the behavior skills necessary to be successful?
- How engaged and involved are the students in this intervention or activity?
- What does the team believe the student is trying to accomplish with the behavior? (What is the function of the behavior?)
 - Avoid or escape something (e.g., difficult task or social interaction)
 - Gain or obtain something (e.g., attention or stimuli)
- Have you consider the ABC's?
 - Antecedent
 - Behavior
 - Consequence

Intervention Intensification Strategy Checklist

Use these ideas, as well as your own, to intensify interventions. For more information about intensifying interventions, check out our website, www.intensiveintervention.org. *Before adapting or intensifying an intervention, always consider whether the current intervention program has been implemented with fidelity and for a sufficient amount of time.*

Strength: Teams can increase the strength of an intervention by focusing on strategies and attention given to other dimensions of the [Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity](#).

Dosage

Increase opportunities for practice and corrective feedback.

- ☐ Increase the length of intervention sessions.
- ☐ Increase the number of intervention sessions per week.
- ☐ Decrease the group size.
- ☐ Increase the total number of sessions.
- ☐ Decrease the heterogeneity of the groups (group students with similar performance levels).
- ☐ Consider an intervention setting with fewer distractions.
- ☐ Embed additional practice and feedback sessions throughout the day.
- ☐ _____

Alignment

- ☐ Increase instructional time for the target skill.*
- ☐ Supplement intervention with National Center on Intensive Intervention materials in [reading](#), [math](#), or [behavior](#).
- ☐ Focus on discrete skill instruction within the target skill.
- ☐ _____

Attention to Transfer

- ☐ Align instructional routines and language with core instruction and the environment.
- ☐ Preteach content.
- ☐ Embed guided practice on target skills within core instruction and other environments.
- ☐ Embed explicit opportunities in other settings to maintain skills acquired in the intervention.
- ☐ Explicitly teach connections.
- ☐ _____

Comprehensiveness or Elements of Explicit Instruction

- ☐ Use precise, simple language to teach key concepts or procedures.
- ☐ When introducing a concept, provide worked examples and show the steps in writing.
- ☐ Present a completed work example. Explain why a specific step is important and have the student complete that step and explain its significance.

- ☐ Model new concepts with examples and “think aloud” as you work through steps.
- ☐ Use explicit instruction and modeling with repetition to teach a concept or demonstrate the steps in a process.
- ☐ Fade steps from examples, so that students gradually assume responsibility for completing more and more steps.
- ☐ Once students can complete entire examples and explain their work, incorporate fluency-building activities to develop automaticity of skills.*
- ☐ Once students can fluently produce correct work, move to a new concept. Provide ongoing practice opportunities to facilitate skill maintenance.*
- ☐ Increase opportunities for student response and practice through unison choral responding, peer activities, and opportunities for the student to perform with adult feedback.*
- ☐ Break academic or behavior tasks into smaller chunks or steps.
- ☐ Provide concrete learning opportunities (including role play and use of manipulatives).
- ☐ Have students explain new concepts, in their own words, incorporating the important terms you have taught.
- ☐ Provide sufficient opportunities for independent practice with feedback.
- ☐ Provide immediate and explicit error correction when mistakes are made, and have the student repeat the correct response before moving on. Offer repeated opportunities to correctly practice the step.*
- ☐ Increase the frequency of error correction and corrective feedback across learning environments.*
- ☐ _____

Behavior, Engagement, and Motivation Support

- ☐ Use a timer for intermittent reinforcement of on-task, appropriate behavior.
- ☐ Provide differential reinforcement or change the schedule of reinforcement.
- ☐ Create a motivation plan based on what you know about the student that provides frequent behavior feedback.
- ☐ Use a report card for home communication.
- ☐ Add a social skills group.
- ☐ Combine or align academic and behavioral supports.
- ☐ Convene a functional behavior assessment team to determine the function of the behavior.
- ☐ Use group contingencies to promote on-task, appropriate behavior.
- ☐ Use peer support to model and encourage desired behavior.
- ☐ _____

Other

- ☐ Change to an interventionist with more expertise, such as a reading specialist, behavior specialist, social worker, or special education teacher, depending on the student’s needs.
- ☐ Change the intervention to better meet the individual needs.
- ☐ _____

*These areas also are important to consider for dosage.