



Illinois State Board of Education


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Chairman

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

January 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
Rtl Network

General Information

Purpose of RFP: The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) seeks to establish and implement the Illinois Response to Intervention (Rtl) Network, or I-Rtl Network, by soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to coordinate and deliver statewide services as outlined in this RFP and to serve as the administrative agent.

Eligible Applicants: Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) and Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs) are eligible to apply. In addition, eligible applicants are strongly encouraged to submit joint applications with other eligible applicants, particularly in light of the partnership requirements of the RFP (see "Program Specifications," pages 7 – 13). If a joint application is submitted, one entity must be designated to serve as the administrative agent.

Grant Award: One grant will be awarded in FY 2011 (year one of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000. The annual grant award amount in Years 2 through 5 (FY 2012, FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015) is expected to range from \$1,535,000 to \$1,700,000. The annual grant amounts will depend on the needs addressed and scope of activities in each year and the total appropriation for the program.

Grant Period: The initial grant period will begin no sooner than March 1, 2011 and will extend from the execution date of the grant agreement until September 30, 2011. The successful applicant may reapply via continuing application 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 **February 25, 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 16 – 18), 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: rtirfp@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/SPDG_QA.pdf and will remain on the website until February 25, 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.

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact Kathryn Cox by phone at 217-782-5589 or by email at 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 SPDG 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 undergraduate and graduate educator preparation programs at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) 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. 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 I-RtI Network. The I-RtI Network will serve as the primary mechanism for accomplishing SPDG Project Objective 1 above and will also have certain responsibilities for supporting accomplishment of SPDG Project Objectives 2 through 4 above (see "Program Specifications," pages 7 – 13 for further details).

The I-RtI Network will provide standardized professional development, technical assistance, and coaching to educators and parents 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. By using a standardized curriculum and a systematic professional development, technical assistance, and coaching structure, the consistency of project services will be improved, as will the systemic implementation of the knowledge and skills gained by the participants. 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 A) and the City of Chicago) served by the I-RtI Network.

Prior and existing ISBE initiatives will provide the foundation for the content of the training, technical assistance, and coaching provided by the I-RtI Network. These initiatives include Illinois ASPIRE (I-ASPIRE), the System of Support established to work with low-performing schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) Regional Delivery System, and the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (ISTAC). A brief overview of each, including their relevance to the I-RtI Network, follows.

I-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 I-ASPIRE and through the Illinois State RtI Plan. Implemented under the 2005-2010 Illinois SPDG, the primary goal of I-ASPIRE was 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 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. In order to enhance sustainability, in the last two years of the project (2008-2010), a coaching-of-coaches component was added through which I-ASPIRE personnel provided training and support to a cadre of 80 regionally based external coaches. In turn, these external coaches have begun providing professional development and coaching to LEAs in their areas to support implementation of a multi-tiered system of instruction, interventions, and assessment, including RtI.

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’s development of a set of 13 standardized training modules focused on improving student performance (see Appendix B).

While I-ASPIRE is coming to an end, the I-RtI Network will build on the work of the previous project. In particular, to better support the scaling up of RtI implementation statewide, the I-RtI Network will significantly expand the aforementioned coaching-of-coaches component and will use the ISBE training modules referenced above as the primary training curriculum in the area of RtI.

System of Support

As part of its system for academic accountability, ISBE places schools that are not making AYP on Academic Early Warning (AEW) or Academic Watch (AW) status based on the performance of their students on state assessments. In addition, schools that use Title I funding are subject to specific federal requirements related to school improvement under ESEA, with schools that fail to achieve standards being required to offer choice options and supplemental educational services.

State and federal laws also require that technical assistance or a system of support be established to help these schools improve academic performance. Currently, ISBE has in place a regionalized delivery system to assist schools in academic difficulty. This system consists of 44 ROEs and three ISCs and was used to create 10 Regional System of Support Providers (RESPROs), which provide support to districts and schools in need of improvement.

In summer 2011, ISBE will launch the enhanced Statewide System of Support (SSOS), which will provide high-quality, coordinated, and consistent support to the RESPROs and will provide ISBE with greater flexibility to quickly scale up services. The enhanced SSOS will ensure that Illinois districts and schools receive quality, timely, and relevant assistance in the following areas: 1) standards-aligned instructional systems, 2) data-driven decision making for continuous improvement, 3) educator talent and effectiveness, 4) analysis and dissemination of research and effective practices, and 5) interventions for turning around low-performing schools.

ISBE believes that successful schools and districts have as their foundation the following essential elements: 1) comprehensive planning for continuous improvement, 2) school culture and climate, 3) community and family engagement, 4) professional development, 5) leadership, 6) curriculum, 7) instruction, and 8) assessment. The SSOS will assist districts and schools in evaluating the presence of these essential elements to identify gaps and measure progress for continual improvement. These elements and the process to evaluate their presence will provide substantive direction for all Illinois schools through diagnosis, followed by targeted interventions, differentiated based on level of need, to improve student achievement. Accordingly, interventions will be tiered—Level 1: Continuous Improvement, Level 2: Targeted Improvement, Level 3: Intensive Support, Level 4: Most Intensive Support (see Appendix C).

The SPDG Project structure will work within the SSOS structure in that the I-Rtl Network will provide a mechanism for the scaling up of Rtl implementation, with regionally based project staff providing direct support to external coaches in coordination with other SSOS assistance and coaching. The services of the I-Rtl Network will also be aligned and integrated with SSOS services to facilitate consistency of all services, sharing of resources, etc., which will further enhance the systemic approach of the project. By serving districts identified as Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS, including those with high percentages of students from low-income backgrounds, the I-Rtl Network will provide services to districts with the greatest level of need. By incorporating the work of the I-Rtl Network into the work of the SSOS, Illinois will be able to implement a fully coordinated and comprehensive system of professional development, coaching, and support to its LEAs.

IARSS Regional Delivery System

Access to high-quality, consistent professional development is provided to all schools and communities in Illinois through a Regional Delivery System, which is implemented by IARSS and includes 44 ROEs and three ISCs that provide statewide coverage of all schools. It uses a Statewide Framework for Regional Delivery of Professional Development that has provided the infrastructure for creation and delivery of state initiatives. IARSS members have researched,

designed, delivered, and evaluated professional development for thousands of educators in areas such as standards alignment, quality classroom assessment, gifted education, and new teacher and principal mentoring, along with programs for content areas such as math and reading. This Regional Delivery System builds capacity and promotes sustainability for reform, while allowing a differentiated approach to better meet the needs of the diverse population. The high quality and consistent professional development delivered through this regional system also leverages resources and reduces duplication of services, thus increasing cost effectiveness.

The I-Rtl Network will be required to work with the IARSS Regional Delivery System to organize, schedule, and deliver training within each of the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago.

ISTAC

Beyond the SSOS and the IARSS Regional Delivery System, the I-Rtl Network will also be coordinated with activities supported through IDEA, Part B funds retained at the state level for personnel and professional development purposes, thereby increasing the systemic impact of the project. Through ISTAC, ISBE funds several projects that provide professional development and technical assistance statewide to educators and parents that are aimed at improving results for children with disabilities and school systems overall. Four of the seven projects are most relevant to the work of the I-Rtl Network:

1. Project CHOICES is a least restrictive environment (LRE) initiative of ISBE, and its purpose is to increase the capacities of school districts and educational personnel to educate and provide supports and services to children and youth with disabilities in the educational environments in which they would participate if not identified as having a disability.
2. The Illinois Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Network provides training, technical assistance, and coaching to help schools and communities address the needs of students with emotional disabilities (ED) and other at-risk students.
3. The Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP) provides training and technical assistance focused on educating and supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.
4. The Parent and Educator Partnership (PEP) advances the ISBE priority of improving the delivery of training and technical assistance to parents and educators of school-age children throughout Illinois. PEP also provides in-kind support for the Parent Mentor Project, through which parent mentors help parents of children with disabilities to effectively navigate the educational system in partnership with school district personnel.

The I-Rtl Network will be required to collaborate with the ISTAC projects, thus resulting in a more comprehensive, coordinated system of professional development and technical

assistance. Such collaboration will also provide for sharing resources and expertise across projects, thereby increasing the statewide reach of the I-Rtl 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 I-Rtl Network 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 I-Rtl Network must be a collaborative partnership of the entities listed below. One or more representatives from each of the required partners must be consulted and/or 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. Required partners include:

- Multiple LEAs, which must include one or more public school districts, one of which should be the Chicago Public Schools District 299; one or more special education joint agreements and cooperatives; and one or more ROEs and/or ISCs within each of the six ROE areas (see Appendix A);
- IHEs; and
- Parent entities, e.g., PEP and/or one of the ISBE-funded Parent Mentor Projects, one or both of the federally funded Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) in the state, or a local nonprofit parent organization. See Appendix D for contact information for PEP, the Parent Mentor Projects, and the PTIs.

With regard to the partnering ROEs and/or ISCs, one ROE or ISC within each of the six ROE areas must be designated as a lead regional entity for the purposes of coordinating with I-Rtl Network staff the scheduling and delivery of training and other project services within the area.

In conjunction with the partnerships discussed above, the successful applicant must establish a project Governing Board consisting of one or more representatives from each of the required partners. The Governing Board will have direct involvement in the execution and management of the project, which will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Monitoring the implementation of key tasks and activities to ensure full and effective delivery of project services.
- Reviewing project evaluation data and using such data to identify needed improvements in the project.
- Assisting in the refinement and/or development of project training and resource materials, including review and approval of such materials in conjunction with ISBE.
- Assisting in the identification of potential project personnel and external coaches within each of the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago (see Project Personnel information below and External Coaches information on page 10).

During project implementation the I-Rtl Network must also:

- Work collaboratively with IHEs to support SPDG Project Objective 3 (refer to page 3), which involves incorporating Rtl content into general and special education preservice and graduate curricula and delivery of training to IHE faculty. (A separate RFP, for which IHEs will be eligible to apply, will be issued to fund this work via the Illinois IHE Partnership.)
- Work collaboratively with the two Illinois PTIs (see Appendix D) to support SPDG Project Objective 2 (refer to page 3), which involves refining existing and developing additional parent informational and training materials and delivering training on Rtl to parents. (ISBE will provide separate funding to the PTIs for this purpose.)

Finally, as stated previously, the I-Rtl Network must coordinate project activities with the SSOS and the IARSS Regional Delivery System and collaborate with existing ISBE training and technical assistance initiatives funded under IDEA Part B (Project CHOICES, the Illinois PBIS Network, IATTAP, and PEP).

Project Personnel: The I-Rtl Network must directly employ, contract with, and/or purchase full time equivalency (FTE) of individuals who will serve as staff for the project. This includes the following:

- With direct involvement of ISBE management and the SPDG Project Director, select and hire or contract with an individual who will serve as a full-time project coordinator for the I-Rtl Network. This individual must have multiple years of experience in the field of education, with K-12 administrative experience preferred, including LEA experience in implementing school improvement processes; at least three years experience managing a technical assistance project of similar magnitude and scope; strong knowledge and skills in school improvement and Rtl; experience and skills in working with adult learners, and at least a Masters Degree in education or a related field (doctorate preferred).

The project coordinator's responsibilities will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Managing the full implementation of the project activities and services.

- Supervising the work of the regional coordinators (see below) and the evaluation coordinator (see Project Evaluation on pages 12 – 13).
 - Working with and reporting to the project Governing Board, including participation in the process for recruiting and selecting external coaches (see External Coaches information on page 10).
 - Working collaboratively with the SSOS to align and coordinate services to participating district sites identified as Level 2 or Level 3 (see Appendix C).
 - Working with the IARSS to coordinate scheduling and delivery of project training within the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago.
 - Conducting regular project meetings involving all project staff and, when appropriate, the SPDG Project Director.
 - Regularly working and meeting with an ISBE intra-agency team responsible for providing guidance and direction to the project and the SSOS,
 - Maintaining ongoing communication with the SPDG Project Director, including preparation and submission of periodic project reports and responding in a timely manner to requests from ISBE for project data and other information.
 - Participating in quarterly meetings of the SPDG project advisory bodies to provide updates on the status of the project.
- Working with ISBE, school districts, special education joint agreements, ROEs, ISCs, and other entities to hire, contract with, and/or purchase FTE of individuals who will serve as regional coordinators in each of the six ROE areas (see Appendix A) and the City of Chicago. These individuals must have multiple years of experience as educators, either in a teaching or administrative capacity; at least two years experience working in a consultant and/or coaching capacity; strong knowledge and skills in school improvement and RtI; experience and skills in working with adult learners; and at least a Bachelor Degree in education (Masters Degree preferred).

The responsibilities of the regional coordinators will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Delivery of training and technical assistance support to the external coaches (see External Coaches information on page 10), teams from participating districts, and others.
- Working with the regional SSOS teams to coordinate services to districts that are served by the RESPROs and are participating in the I-RtI Network.
- Assisting with project data collection.

One regional coordinator position within each of the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago must be full-time (Note: FTE may be adjusted based on the population of a particular area), with the individual in this position designated as the lead regional coordinator for his/her assigned area. ISBE will be directly involved in the process of selecting the lead regional coordinators. Each lead regional coordinator will:

- Be responsible for coordinating the training and technical assistance activities, including supports provided to external coaches, and delivering training and technical assistance in his/her assigned area.
- Facilitate timely submission of evaluation data by participating districts in the area.
- Work directly with the RESPRO(s) in his/her assigned area to coordinate and align services to participating district sites identified as Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS.
- Be assigned to work directly with the designated lead ROE or ISC within his/her assigned area to coordinate the scheduling and delivery of training.

Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Coaching Plan: The I-Rtl Network must implement a coordinated plan for delivery of professional development, technical assistance, and coaching services. This plan must address each of the areas discussed below.

External Coaches: As stated previously, the I-Rtl Network will expand on the coaching-of-coaches component of I-ASPIRE. Accordingly, the I-Rtl Network will be responsible for the recruitment, training, and support of a cadre of regionally based (within the six ROE areas shown in Appendix A and the City of Chicago) external coaches who will, in turn, provide training, coaching, and mentoring support to identified district sites. This responsibility will involve:

- Working with school districts, special education joint agreements, ROEs, ISCs, RESPROs, and other entities to recruit and select regionally based external coaches (at least 90 coaches initially with at least seven to ten added annually) who are employees of those entities and provide training and support to these individuals in their coaching role (see Appendix E for sample external coaches application used under I-ASPIRE).
- Providing professional development (at least 10 sessions per year) and coaching for the external coaches cadre to gain knowledge and skills in coaching and in a multi-tiered model of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment.
- Providing support for the external coaches through onsite coaching (at least twice monthly) and mentoring, job shadowing, and coaches networking meetings.
- Supporting the external coaches in working directly with the participating districts (see Services to District Sites below) to:
 - Provide training and technical assistance, including support for internal building coaches;
 - Coordinate small group meetings of staff across sites for reflection and networking; and
 - Carry out district-, school-, and student-level evaluation activities.

The external coaches must be assigned to work with participating district sites within each of the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago. Depending on the number and location of participating district sites served each year and given the requirement that the majority of districts be at Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS, external coaches will, to the extent possible, be assigned to serve one or more districts located in every ROE and ISC in the state across the five years of the project.

Professional Development: Professional development must include delivery of:

- Training on effective coaching (process and content) for a target audience that includes the external coaches, as well as internal coaches in the participating districts and, to the extent possible, individuals within each of the six ROE areas who work in a coaching role in other LEAs;
- The ISBE training modules (see Appendix B), with a target audience that includes the external coaches, teams within the participating district sites, IHE faculty, and, to the extent feasible, teams from other LEAs; and
- At least one statewide conference per year.

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 F). 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.

Applicants must project: 1) the number of people (e.g., external coaches, LEA teams, parents, IHE faculty) who will be trained and/or receive technical assistance and coaching each year, 2) the number of training events to be held, and 3) the amount and type(s) of technical assistance and coaching services that will be provided. Applicants must also delineate strategies to ensure that individuals throughout the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago have equitable access to the training and technical assistance services to be provided. In addition, applicants must describe how the proposed I-Rtl Network will facilitate opportunities for networking among and partnering of school districts that participate in the training, technical assistance, and coaching activities of the project.

Services to District Sites: The I-Rtl Network will be required to work with ISBE to recruit and select participating district sites in each of the six ROE areas (see Appendix A) and the City of Chicago, based on criteria that will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Student performance on state assessments in reading and math;
- AYP status for the general population and subgroups, including identification as a Level 2 or Level 3 LEA in the SSOS (see Appendix C);
- Free and reduced lunch count (this factor and AYP status will be used to target low-performing districts with high percentages of students from low-income backgrounds);
- Suspension/expulsion rates;
- Special education disproportionality in identification, placement, or discipline of students with disabilities;
- LRE data; and
- Special Education General Supervision and Focused Monitoring report results.

It is anticipated that at least 90 participating districts will be identified by the end of Year 1 of the grant project for participation in Year 2, with new districts added each year thereafter to expand the impact of the project. In order to provide services to districts with the greatest level of need, low-performing districts (identified as Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS) with high percentages (40 percent or more) of students from low-income backgrounds must be given priority in selecting participating districts. Accordingly, at least 70 percent of districts selected to participate must fall into this group.

Applicants must specify the projected number of district sites to be established and served within each ROE area and the City of Chicago. Depending on the number and location of participating district sites served each year and given the requirement that the majority of districts be at Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS, the I-Rtl Network will, to the extent possible, serve one or more districts located in every ROE and ISC in the state across the five years of the project.

Once the district sites have been established, the I-Rtl Network will be responsible for working directly with the external coaches and sites to:

- Provide training;
- Provide technical assistance, including recruitment and training of LEA coaches;
- Facilitate parent involvement in each site;
- Coordinate small group networking meetings of staff across sites for reflection, collaboration, and resource sharing; and
- Conduct district-, school-, and student-level data collection.

Project Evaluation: ISBE will provide separate funding under which an external project evaluator will be secured and have primary responsibility for implementing the project evaluation plan (see Appendix G and/or refer to ISBE's federal grant application for the SPDG Project at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm). In addition, the I-Rtl Network will be responsible for carrying out evaluation activities to support SPDG Project Objective 4 (refer to page 3), including the evaluation of the training, technical assistance, and coaching services provided by the Network, as well as the evaluation of the impact of the services through data collection at the district, school, and student levels within the participating district sites. To that end, the I-Rtl Network must allocate funds for a part-time evaluation coordinator who will work directly with the external project evaluator to fulfill all project evaluation requirements.

The evaluation coordinator must have a thorough working knowledge of and experience with evaluation procedures for projects of a similar nature and scope, including data analysis and interpretation, and hold at least a Bachelor Degree (Masters Degree preferred). This individual, along with the project coordinator and regional coordinators, must:

- Participate in a training overview of the project evaluation tools and system.

- Collaborate with the external project evaluator to establish and/or refine the data collection system and with the I-Rtl Network site participants to implement the system.
- Work with the external project evaluator to refine existing and, if necessary, develop new evaluation tools.
- Work with the external project evaluator 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 Rtl process.
- Provide technical assistance to regional coordinators, external coaches, and when needed, districts and school sites, on the data collection system.
- Work with the external project evaluator to coordinate data collection efforts in the I-Rtl Network regions and selected nonparticipating network schools in those regions for comparison purposes.
- 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: A project website must be established and maintained and must meet a government- or industry-recognized standard for accessibility (e.g., Bobby™, which is a web-based tool that analyzes web pages for their accessibility to people with disabilities). This work must include incorporation of content on the existing I-ASPIRE website (<http://www.illinoisaspire.org>).

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 interactions with the ISBE intra-agency team referenced earlier; regular online, teleconference, and/or in-person 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 Rtl Stakeholder Group.

The grant awarded in FY 2011 will be used for planning and initial implementation of the I-Rtl Network services. Refinement and full implementation will begin in FY 2012 and will continue through the end of the project. It should be noted that once the enhanced SSOS is operationalized (projected to be established in summer 2011), certain adjustments in the configuration of I-Rtl Network services may be required.

It is intended that the I-Rtl Network coaching services will continue after the grant period ends, along with continued implementation of the trained Rtl 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 building 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 \$1,000,000. It is anticipated that the grant will continue for four additional years (FY 2012 through FY 2015), with an estimated annual amount of \$1,535,000 to \$1,700,000. 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 full-time project coordinator position.
- A part-time evaluation coordinator position.
- At least seven full-time (one in each of the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago; FTE may be adjusted based on the population of a particular area) and multiple part-time regional coordinator positions. The regional coordinator positions must be allocated to ensure appropriate levels of support to each of the six ROE areas shown in Appendix A and the City of Chicago.
- The project website.

It is anticipated that the successful grantee will contribute local resources (e.g., in-kind contributions such as use of equipment, space in a building) 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 I-Rtl Network coaching services and trained Rtl practices being sustainable after the end of the funding period.

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

- Salaries and/or purchased services of a full-time project coordinator, a part-time regional evaluator, full- and part-time regional coordinators, and other personnel for which a need is clearly demonstrated in the proposal;
- Consultant fees to develop and/or refine and implement the training, technical assistance, and coaching activities;

- Offsetting a small portion of, but not entirely supplanting, salaries of external coaches (amount to be reduced over time so that the coaches' employers assume the full cost of salaries by the end of the project);
- Costs related to project staff travel in providing training, technical assistance, and coaching services, including travel expenses of external coaches in conjunction with their participation in and/or delivery of such services (please note the Travel Requirements below);
- Costs related to professional development for project staff so they are able to continue to increase their knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to provide high quality project services.
- Substitute pay, but only if school district staff are utilized as training or technical assistance providers;
- Supplies and materials costs associated with the development and provision of training, technical assistance, and coaching, 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;
- Office space rental;
- 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.

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 \$1,000,000 in FY 2011 and from \$1,535,000 to \$1,700,000 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 – 10 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/spec-ed/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 (e.g., regional superintendent, director of special education) 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 overall objectives and activities of the project. The abstract must be double-spaced and may not exceed three pages.
- ___ **3. Proposal Narrative:** Follow the specifications found under “Proposal Narrative Requirements” on pages 18 – 20.
- ___ **4. Project Action Plan (Attachment 3):** In conjunction with each component addressed under “Program Specifications,” pages 7 – 13, 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 delineated in Appendix G in order to determine whether progress is being made toward achieving the project’s objectives. Describe how the evaluation coordinator and other project staff will fulfill their responsibilities related to collecting, verifying, and reporting evaluation data at the project, district, school, and student levels, including how coordination with the external evaluator will occur. Discuss steps to be taken in working with and providing technical assistance to the district sites to implement the data collection activities.

- ___ **6. Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 5a):** Must be submitted on the form provided. Separate forms must be completed for Year 1 (maximum of \$1,000,000) and for each of Years 2 through 5 (maximum of \$1,535,000 to \$1,700,000 per year) of the project. The form completed for year one must be signed by the district superintendent or 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, which may be accessed at 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 the following: a full-time project coordinator position, a part-time regional evaluator position, at least seven full-time (one per ROE area and the City of Chicago; FTE may be adjusted based on the population of a particular area) and multiple part-time regional coordinator positions, and certain costs to support the work of the external coaches (as discussed under allowable use of funds in the preceding Fiscal Information section).

- ___ **7. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 5b):** Separate budget breakdown forms must be completed for each of Years 1 through 5. 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 2).

- ___ **8. Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 6 – 10):** 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)
- e. Notice to All Applicants Regarding Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (Attachment 10).

- ___ **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. Letters from partnering ROEs or ISCs that will serve as the lead ROE or ISC within each of the six ROE areas must include documentation of each entity’s agreement to serve in that capacity. For those partnering entities that will be members of the project Governing Board, letters must include documentation of the entity’s understanding of and agreement to fulfill the responsibilities associated with serving on the board.

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 20 pages.

- A. Partnerships and Collaboration: Describe the required partners who were consulted and/or participated in the development of the proposal and will participate in the implementation of the I-Rtl Network, as well as the commitment of each to the project (for example, a parent organization’s commitment to work with the I-Rtl Network in scheduling and delivering training for parents). Include a description of how parents have been and will be involved in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Discuss the strategies that will be used to work with IHEs to influence preservice curricula and with the Illinois PTIs to refine and develop additional parent informational and training materials and deliver training to parents. In addition, describe the means by which the proposed I-Rtl Network will coordinate project activities with the SSOS and the IARSS Regional Delivery System and collaborate with existing ISBE-funded training and technical assistance initiatives.
- B. Project Personnel: Describe the staff and staffing patterns to be used in the provision of training, technical assistance, and coaching, including how key project staff (project coordinator, evaluation coordinator, regional coordinators) will be secured and, if applicable, how consultants will be identified and utilized. List each person to potentially 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 programs and people 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, Technical Assistance, and Coaching Plan: Describe in detail how the professional development, technical assistance, and coaching services, including

services to external coaches and participating district sites, will be structured and delivered and provide a rationale for the chosen approach. 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 amount and type(s) of coaching services to be provided, and
5. The number of participating districts sites to be established and served within each of the ROE areas.

Discuss how the I-Rtl Network will work with ISBE to recruit and select participating district sites within the six ROE areas and the City of Chicago. Also discuss how the proposed I-Rtl Network will ensure that individuals throughout those six areas have equitable access to the training and technical assistance services to be provided, as well as how parent participation in the provision and receipt of training and technical assistance under the project will be ensured. This should include strategies for publicizing professional development events and other services of the I-Rtl Network. Provide examples of the types of opportunities to be arranged for school districts that participate in the training, technical assistance, and coaching activities 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 at both the I-Rtl Network and participating district site levels will be carried out and coordinated with the statewide evaluator. (See Appendix G.)
- E. Project Website: Describe the approach to be used in establishing and maintaining the project website. Discuss steps that will be taken to ensure that the website meets a government- or industry-recognized standard for accessibility.
- F. Communication with ISBE: Discuss how the requirements for regular communication with ISBE will be fulfilled, including interactions with the ISBE intra-agency team and timely reporting and interaction with the SPDG project director and project advisory bodies (ISAC and the Rtl 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, technical assistance, and coaching, as well as knowledge and expertise in the professional development content discussed in the “Program Specifications” of the RFP.

- H. Sustainability: Describe steps that will be taken toward maintaining the project services and implementation of the trained RtI practices after the end of the grant period. Provide strategies for sharing information about the project results or for replicating the project in other areas.

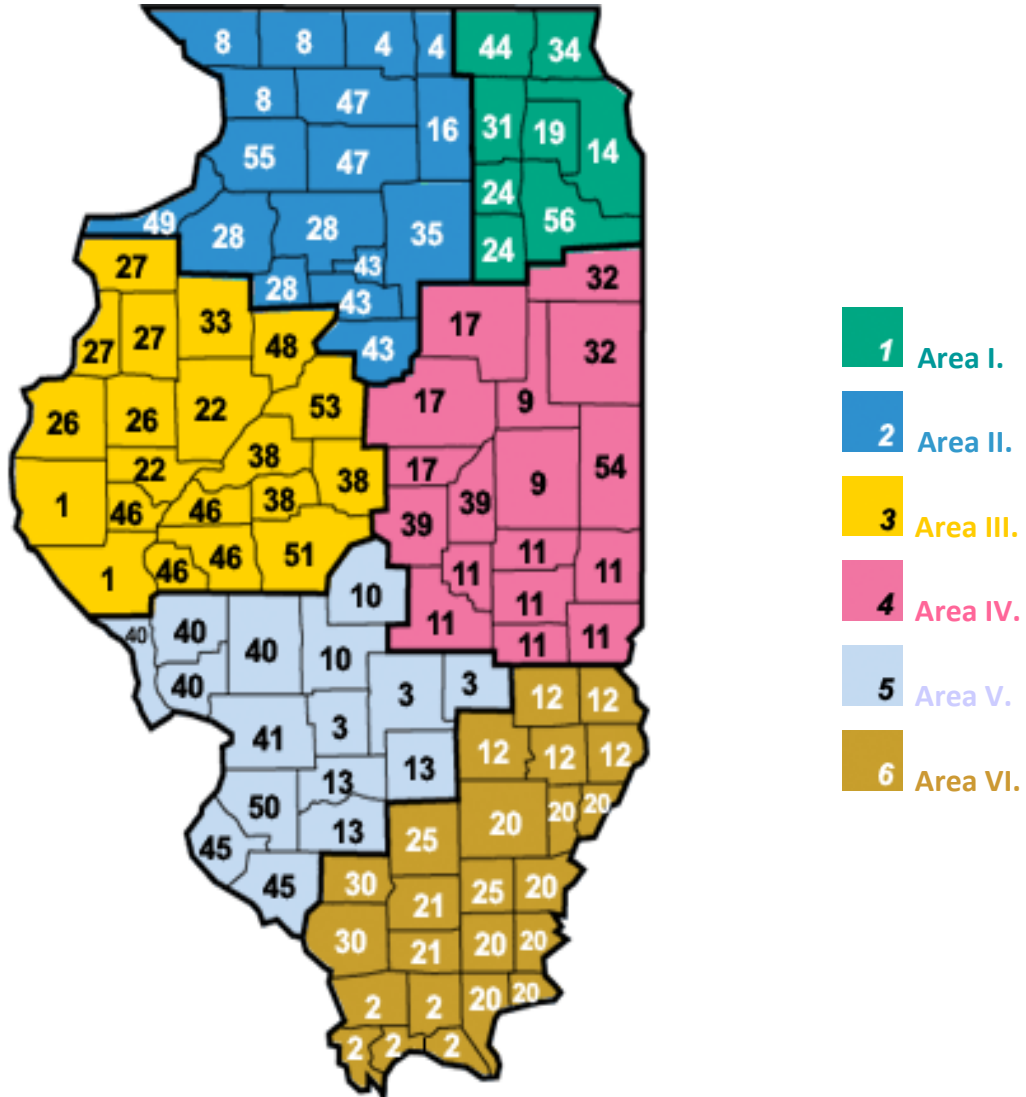
Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

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, technical assistance, and coaching (including coordination with the SSOS and the IARSS Regional Delivery System and collaboration with existing ISBE projects), consistency and comprehensiveness of training, area coverage, 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 each objective, 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 objectives 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 school personnel, parents, and 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, technical assistance, and coaching 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.

Map of ROE Areas



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. 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). 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.

Differentiated Illinois Statewide System of Support (SSOS)

LEVEL 1: Continuous Improvement		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA directed • Public notification of assessment scores • Recognition of incremental improvement • Access to quality research-based materials • Unified ISBE approach • Transparency and shared accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based materials • SSOS-defined menu of services • ISBE-established self-assessment tool • Five-step guided process • IIRC and ISBE-established online improvement planning tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of all LEAs (867 districts) • SSOS-approved menu of resources

LEVEL 2: Targeted Improvement		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA with regional support direction • Two-year commitment and accountability • Funding: 1003 (a) • Level 1 Incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional assistance with the ISBE-established self-assessment tool • Resources and monitoring through regional support system (e.g., monitoring, coaching, consulting, planning, training, modeling) • Guided Data analysis • Level 1 Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 15% of LEAs (130 districts) across levels 2-4 with approximately 123 districts served at this level • Two year data • Members of the Regional System of Support

LEVEL 3: Intensive Support		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA with direction from the SSOS • Two-year commitment and accountability • Differentiated approach at school-level • Directing resources to the LEA through partnerships with IASB, IPA, IASA, etc. • Funding: 1003 (a) and (g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work more closely with the SSOS • Share responsibility for intensive support across agency (Roundtable) • Flexibility according to size and district characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 4% of the 15% of LEAs, therefore approximately 5 districts served at this level • Renewable • Agency staff engaged in partnership with district • ISBE level • Multi-phased improvement

LEVEL 4: Most Intensive Support		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly prescriptive by ISBE • Radical departure from current practices • Diversion of funds • Negotiate status of closed schools • Money to overcome Title I barriers • ISBE takes federally-authorized bold actions • Directing resources to the LEA through partnerships with IASB, IPA, IASA, etc. • District/School Closure • Funding: 1003 (a) and (g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE directs SSOS involvement with the LEA • Close or radical redirection of school/district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 2% of the 15% of LEAs, therefore approximately 2 districts served at this level

Parent Entities Contact Information

Name	Address	Phone	Fax	Email	Area Served
Parent & Educator Partnership					
Siefken, Merle	25 S. Washington, Suite 106 Naperville, IL 60540	877-317-2733	630-428-4055	msiefken@sased.org	Statewide
Parent Mentor Projects					
Cindy Belleque	Illinois Federation of Families PO Box 215 Mt. Morris, IL 61054	773-726-7620		Cbelleque@ocecil.org	Ogle County
Bux, Joy	SEDOL 18160 Gages Lake Rd Gages Lake, IL 60630-1819	847-548-8470 847-548-9726 (TTY)	847-548-8472	jbux@sedol.k12.il.us	Lake County
Cuba, Priscilla	SEDOL 18160 Gages Lake Rd Gages Lake, IL 60630-1819	847-548-8470 847-548-9726 (TTY)	847-548-8472	pcuba@sedol.k12.il.us	Lake County
Hans, Sue	NSSSED 760 Red Oak Lane Highland Park, IL 60035-3899	847-831-5100 ext. 2228	847-831-5108	shans@nsssed.org	North Suburban
Hartwell, Marilyn	203 Rustic Campus Dr. Ullin, IL 62992	618-634-9322	618-634-2684	Cbelleque@ocecil.org	Southern Illinois
Keller, Leslie	Tri-County Special Education 812 Lincoln Avenue Lincoln, IL 62656	217-732-2316	217-735-2711	lkeller@adi.org	Logan County
Kraft, Connie	RAMP 2155 W. Galena Avenue Freeport, IL 61032	815-233-1128	815-233-0743	ckraft@rampcil.org	Freeport
Luzadder, Patricia	Chicago Public Schools 125 S. Clark Street Chicago, IL 60603	773-553-2258	773-553-1906	pmluzadder@cps.k12.il.us	Chicago
Mueller, Peggy	District 118 & District 201 Belleville, IL 62220	618-520-1380	618-233-8355	pmuel@pepartnership.org	Belleville
Roth, Janalle	Waukegan Public Schools 742 W. Greenwood Ave. Waukegan, IL 60087	847-360-7039	847-263-4731	jroth@wps60.org	Waukegan
Thomas, Macie	Illinois Federation of Families 506 W 4th Street Sterling, IL 61081	815-441-9408		M.thomasiff@yahoo.com	Whiteside County

Name	Address	Phone	Fax	Email	Area Served
Williams, Robin	Schuyler-Industry School District 310 N. Monroe Street Rushville, IL 62681	217-322-4311 ext. 207	217-322-648	rwilliams@sid5.com	Rushville
Parent Training and Information Centers					
Michelle Phillips	Family Resource Center on Disabilities 20 E. Jackson Blvd., Rm. 300 Chicago, IL 0604	312-939-3513 312-939-3519 (TTY & TDY)	312-939-7297	info@frcd.org OR michelle.phillips@frcd.org	Cook, Du Page, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties
Deb Einhorn	Family Matters 2502 South Veterans Drive Effingham, IL 62401	217-347-5428	217-347-5119	info@fmptic.org OR deinhorn@arc-css.org	All other Illinois counties

APPLICATION FOR RTI EXTERNAL COACHES PARTNERSHIP (SAMPLE)
Illinois ASPIRE – Central

General Information

Eligible Applicants: Public school districts, special education joint agreements/cooperatives, Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) and Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs) are eligible to apply, provided they are located in the geographic area served by the Illinois Alliance for School-Based Problem-Solving and Intervention Resources in Education (I-ASPIRE) – Central region. Each applicant must designate one or more individuals Coaches, who will be trained by I-ASPIRE staff to serve as External Coaches/Trainers for school districts in their area.

Number of Applicants to be Selected: The number of applicants selected will depend upon the number of External Coaches to be supported through this project. It is projected that the I-ASPIRE region will have the capacity to train and support up to 20 External Coaches for the 2008-09 school year.

Start Date: It is estimated that training to the designated external coaches will begin by February 2009.

Application Deadline: Applications must be received by Friday, November 21, 2008. Mail the original plus 5 copies (six in all) to *[contact person and address]*. No FAX copies of applications will be accepted.

Contact Person: For more information about this application, contact *[name, phone number, email address]*.

Background

In September 2005, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) received a five-year State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) issued by the U.S. Department of Education under Part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. To implement the objectives of the SPDG Project, in February 2006 ISBE established I-ASPIRE and funded four regional I-ASPIRE Centers—one in the city of Chicago and one each in the northern, central and southern parts of the state. ROE 48 was funded to operate the I-ASPIRE – Central grant.

The overarching goal of the I-ASPIRE Grant Project is to:

Establish and implement a coordinated, regionalized system of personnel development that will increase the capacity of school systems to provide early intervening services, aligned with the general education curriculum, to at-risk students and students with disabilities, as measured by improved student progress and performance.

The professional development and technical assistance under I-ASPIRE focuses on designing and implementing a multi-tiered early intervening services model including RtI. See ISBE's State RtI Plan at http://www.isbe.net/RtI_plan/default.htm for the state's definition of RtI. ISBE initiatives such as the former Flexible Service Delivery Project (problem solving and RtI), Standards-Aligned Classrooms and Illinois Reading First helped provide the foundation for the content of the training and technical assistance provided by each I-ASPIRE region.

In addition to the initiatives listed above, in June 2008 Illinois was selected as one of four states participating in the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs' national technical assistance grant to "promote student academic achievement and behavioral health by supporting implementation and scaling-up of evidence-based practices in education settings." The State

Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center “will work with the selected states to increase their capacity to carry out implementation, organizational change, and systems transformation strategies to maximize achievement outcomes of all students in each state.” I-ASPIRE will be an integral component of Illinois’ SISEP activities, and the primary focus of SISEP will be on:

1. Full integration of all ISBE-supported general and special education training and technical assistance projects to ensure a cohesive approach to implementing effective practices,
2. Establishing a statewide coaching network that will support the implementation of evidence-based practices in schools across the state and
3. Data-based decision making founded on outcomes measurements.

I-ASPIRE is also an integral part of ISBE’s efforts to ramp up implementation of RtI across the state. While RtI is connected to the state special education regulations that went into effect in June 2007, as conceived by ISBE, RtI is more than part of the process to determine eligibility for specific learning disabilities. RtI is an overall school improvement process. This school improvement process is designed to provide scientifically based, appropriate instruction to *all* students in a multi-tiered early intervening services model.

As a result of the changes discussed above, the scope of I-ASPIRE is being expanded from grades K-3 to grades K-12 and the target of intensive training efforts are being extended to larger scale educational units to support implementation through a broader coaching-of-coaches model.

Program Specifications

Partnerships and Collaboration

Each application must involve a collaborative partnership of multiple entities. Examples of such partnerships include the following:

- One or more special education joint agreements/cooperatives in conjunction with multiple school districts and/or one or more ROEs or ISCs.
- One or more ROEs or ISCs in conjunction with multiple school districts and/or one or more special education joint agreements/cooperatives.
- Multiple school districts in partnership with one or more special education joint agreements/cooperatives and/or ROEs or ISCs.
- Multiple school districts in partnership with each other.

Service Commitments

I-ASPIRE Commitments

I-ASPIRE – Central will commit to providing the following for designated External Coaches AT NO COST:

1. Training in seven ASPIRE modules ranging from RtI Essential Components to Advanced Problem Solving Skills,
2. Training in coaching and team building skills and
3. Ongoing support from ASPIRE staff for technical assistance needs, including monthly contact (e.g., via meetings, email, telephone) and regular networking opportunities with other coaches in the I-ASPIRE – Central region.

Financial support in an amount up to \$XX per person will also be made available, if needed, to offset External Coach expenses, e.g., travel costs to attend training.

Applicant Commitments

The applicant will commit to:

1. Designate individuals who demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities delineated under “External Coach Characteristics” (see below) to be trained and serve as external coaches.
2. Allow the identified individuals to participate in the training provided by I-ASPIRE.
3. Allocate a percentage (e.g., 0.4 Full Time Equivalency (FTE)) of each trained individual’s position to provide the training and coaching services delineated under “External Coach Commitments.”
4. Allocate funds for the salary corresponding to the external coaching position’s FTE.
5. Ensure that the trained External Coach(es) fulfill the “External Coach Commitments.”
6. Assist with the coordination of training and coaching services to be delivered by the trained External Coach(es), including assistance with scheduling and location of training for school and district teams.

External Coach Commitments

The trained external coaches will commit to:

1. Participate in training and networking provided by I-ASPIRE, as discussed above.
2. Participate in technical assistance provided by I-ASPIRE, as discussed above.
3. Provide training to district and school teams in seven I-ASPIRE modules ranging from RtI Essential Components to Advanced Problem Solving Skills.
4. Provide ongoing coaching to internal building coaches for technical assistance needs.
5. Guide internal building coaches in implementing problem solving processes (including team roles, meeting structure, etc.).
6. Facilitate the use of a team-based, problem solving process to provide interventions for all students at the universal, targeted and intensive levels.
7. Use required data on a regular basis (satisfaction surveys and critical components checklists quarterly; universal screening and progress monitoring tools such as AIMSweb or DIBELS, sources of student discipline data such as SWIS, School Report Card and Child Count data and parent surveys annually).
8. Guide internal building coaches in collecting and using data on at least a monthly basis for decision-making purposes.
9. Guide internal building coaches to work with their building teams to develop an annual action plan for RtI activities based on analysis of collected data.
10. Disseminate information to staff members in the district(s) and school(s) served.

External Coach Characteristics

Individuals who will be trained and serve as External Coaches under the RtI External Coaches Partnership should have the following characteristics:

- Knowledge, skills & abilities with:
 - Curriculum-based evaluation (CBE)
 - Functional behavior assessment (FBA)
 - Reading programs
 - Scientific, research-based instruction and interventions
 - 3-tiered model of instruction, assessment and intervention
 - Instructional and behavioral coaching
- Experience and skills in working with adult learners

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>.

SPDG Project Evaluation Plan

An external evaluator will implement the proposed evaluation plan (see table below) annually. Participating I-Rtl Network districts and schools will provide data online to the project evaluator. The evaluator will provide aggregate reports to the Rtl 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 are included in Appendix D). This work will involve collaboration with staff of the Problem Solving and Rtl 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 I-Rtl Network staff, external coaches, and participating districts and to the IHE Partnership participants.
- Complete annual reports to be reviewed by ISBE, ISAC, and the Rtl Stakeholder Group.
- Attend ISAC and Rtl Stakeholder Group meetings to provide project evaluation updates.
- Work with I-Rtl 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 Rtl into their curriculum and field placements, and (c) the effects of implementation of the Rtl process.

The I-Rtl 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 Rtl process.
- Collaborate with the project evaluator to establish the data collection system and the I-Rtl 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 I-Rtl 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 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 Implementation (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 I-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 I-Rtl 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 I-Rtl 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 I-Rtl 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 RtI Network increase parent awareness and understanding of RtI?
- 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 RtI 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 I-RtI 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 RtI 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 RtI 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.