Webinar Transcript

Response to Intervention: Online Professional Development Modules and Resources for Implementation

Sylvia: Okay, are we ready, Julie?

Julie: We are ready to go. Welcome, everyone, to the SchoolsMovingUp online event in collaboration with the IRIS Center, and we're very excited that we can have you here today. And the online event today is titled *Response to Intervention: Online Professional Development Modules and Resources for Implementation*. My name is Julie Duffield, and I am a part of the California Comprehensive Center and SchoolsMovingUp.

I'm moving now to Slide 2, and I would like to introduce...as I said, this is a series of presentations that WestEd is doing in collaboration with the IRIS Center. I'd like to quickly introduce Sylvia Jeravo, who is also going to also help co-host this event. Hi, Sylvia.

Sylvia: Oh, there I am!

Julie: Sylvia, you can quickly introduce this before I go over some housekeeping. Sylvia: Okay. This is a series of Webinars, and this first one today we're simply, not simply, we actually have a lot to cover, go over really what the IRIS Center has as far as resources around RTI, and then in two weeks we're going to be looking specifically at two of those modules that are around classroom assessment and progress monitoring as one of those essential components for RTI processing. These tools are so practical. We just felt that—the IRIS Center and the Comprehensive Center—just felt like these tools need to get into many hands as possible, and that's why we're here today.

Julie: Thank you, Sylvia. I'm moving onto Slide 3, which is the welcome and housekeeping, and for those of you who just joined us, we are having all of the interaction today will either be by the chat area, where a lot of people on the Webinar are introducing one other. We'll also be sharing some polls, and those polls will appear where you're now seeing the PowerPoint slide, and we'll give you some time to respond to those. Some of them will be quick multiple choices, and others will be asking you to reflect, and we'll be publishing the comments. Today's event is being archived, so for some reason if you need to step away or want to share it with your colleagues, it's up there. We'll also be showing a video clip, and at that time we'll be pushing out a screen, and we'll be asking you to listen to the video clip that's about two and a half minutes long, then close down the screen where you watched the video clip and come back to the Webinar area. If you need technical assistance for any reason, you can click on my name on the right side of the screen—J. Duffie or Dan Wilson. You can also email us, and all that information was in the packet that

was sent out to you. I'm going to head back to you now, Slide 4 as Sylvia introduces her co-presenters for today.

Sylvia: Okay. Well, co-presenting with us today, we have Naomi Tyler, who is a research assistant professor at Peabody College at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and she is the co-director for the IRIS Center for Training Enhancements, which is actually a national center that is funded by the U.S. Department of Educations Office for Special Education Programs. Their charge is to develop online materials about working with students with disabilities in inclusive settings. Along with her today, we were going to have Dr. Kathy Strunk, who is a Tennessee State Improvement Grant...works for the department in Tennessee, and she unfortunately is very ill today, and so she has her other part, Donna Parker, take her place today, and she is the Tennessee State Department General Supervision Enhancement Grant project manager. And also with us today is Debbie Williams, and she is the program specialist for Hardeman County, Tennessee, having experience in reading and math, teaching grades K–12 and also special education experience. Donna and Debbie are going to be sharing some of that hands-on implementation pieces. We're going to take a look at what IRIS has. Naomi is going to share that rich information with us, and then Donna and Debbie will really walk us through some of the real practice implementation pieces.

Julie: Thank you, Sylvia. So we're moving on, and for those of you following along in the PowerPoint only, we're going to do now a quick poll, which is Slide 5. And so for those on the Webinar, you should see on the screen now, "What Is Your Primary Role?" I know that you've been sharing that in the chat area, but this will give the presenters a quick way to see in the chart what is on the call. So if you can take about 30 seconds and please select which one is most appropriate and hit the "Submit" button.

Julie (resuming): Okay, thank you. I'm just going to publish that now. So if you haven't finished, please hit the "Submit" button. Again, if you're joining in a small group you might get...nominate someone to do these polls on behalf of the group. So I'm publishing that now. So, Sylvia, would you like to respond to the...

Sylvia: Yeah, it looks like we have a quite of mix of people—LEA administrators, professional development providers. That's great. For some of you others, if you wouldn't mind typing down there in that chat area, you know, what it is that you do. It's also exciting to see some classroom teachers and coaches here, as well. So I think, hopefully, the information that we have is really going to be what you need as far as being an LEA administrator or TA provider or professional development provider, as well. I'm going to go ahead and get started here because we really have so much to cover. Really move ahead here to make sure we get through all of this great content. So, Julie, I'm going to push out this next slide here.

Julie: Yes. It's, it's...

Sylvia: And just to briefly look at how this fits into the context of RTI. The Center on Instruction and several of the national centers have developed this list of essential components of RTI, and today we will really be looking at this last bullet, the staff development and collaboration piece, and then in the next Webinar on the eighteenth, we are going to be looking at progress monitoring, which is one of those essential pieces. Within these modules, we do cover the school-wide commitment piece, which is in the administrator module, universal screening. And progress monitoring is really touched on in all of the modules, along with, "How do we do that multi-tiered intervention?" But today we'll be really be looking at the staff development piece, and in two weeks the progress monitoring. So, Naomi, can you tell us about the IRIS Center?

Naomi: Okay, well, on behalf of myself and Deb Smith, the co-director of the IRIS Center, we'd like to thank you all for logging on today, and hopefully we have got a lot of stuff that'll answer some of the questions that you've got about RTI. Silvia already did a great job of sort of introducing IRIS, who we are, what do we do. One of the big questions we get is, "What does IRIS stand for?" And IRIS stands for "IDEA '04 and Research for Inclusive Settings." We are a federally funded project whose goal is to develop materials on students with disabilities and those who are struggling learners, and get that information out to teachers in the classroom, professional development providers, college faculty, college students, anybody that will be working with these students. We provide resources for college courses, professional development. Because we're Web-based, we can have a lot fun making them interactive. All of our modules are challenge-based—which Silvia will be showing you in a little bit—starting off with realistic classroom scenarios. And all the materials are free online. You don't need a password or user name or anything like that to get on it. It's free to make it easier for you to access.

As far as the kinds of support that IRIS provides for those of you that are looking at implementing RTI: As you and your districts start to have conversations about implementing RTI, decisions on what module you're going to use, how many tiers, and so on, as you are looking for materials, you can contact the folks at IRIS-West, which is the component of IRIS that handles our dissemination and outreach, and they will hook you up with professional training for the folks that do professional development for you. We provide training for professional development providers. We can't go district-by-district or school-by-school, but we can hit the folks that *do* go district-to-district and school-to-school. To help us out, we go through this Webinar to find out just what kinds of information that you're looking for, so we can make sure that we highlight it, we've got another little poll here if you could just real quickly click on the type of information that you are seeking out of this Webinar and then submit that.

Naomi (resuming): For those of you who are listening in, it looks like one big area of interest is tiered instruction, and early intervening was the biggest area, followed by coordinating school and personnel resources, and student scheduling. So we will make sure that we address that later on, and then universal screening and progress

monitoring was the third highest, followed by the others. We'll make sure that we address those and the kinds of materials we have in those areas.

Naomi (resuming): We're on Slide 13 now, for those of you who following along, and we have just a whole bunch of different materials that are *free* on our Website. I want to make sure I get that *free* in there again. We'll be highlighting our interactive modules today, but in addition to those we have case studies. We have information briefs that are just…if you're looking up something quick, you want to find out something about a particular disability or a particular intervention, and you want a two-to-three page brief on it, you can get that there. College instructors, we have a lot of different activities that you can do with your students in your courses. We have a resource directory with links to other federally funded centers and other sites that have information about working with kids with disabilities. An online dictionary, which is great when you can't…when you're trying to find an explanation of a particular word or definition or acronym that we are so fond of using in special education. We have all of these types of materials available on our site.

But since today we're talking about RTI and those modules, these…we have a six-modules series on RTI, and they were developed in collaboration with the Tennessee State Improvement Grant, through the IRIS Center, the Tennessee State Department of Education, and the Office of Special Education Programs in Washington, DC. So this was really great collaboration from a federal-, state-, and a university-level to develop these materials. In order to find them, to find us, we've got our Website listed here. One of the easiest ways to find us if you don't happen to have that available is to just do a Google search for the "IRIS Center" and then bookmark it. We're the first thing that comes up under that. We've got two Websites. One is no "www" and then followed by iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu. That gives you the full chain on how to find us. And then the second one is just www.iriscenter.com. If one of those doesn't work, and you get a "not found" when you're doing your Google search, it's probably 'cause you either have a "www" on one or you don't have it on the other.

Sylvia: All right. Thank you, Naomi. And I found that that "www" is an easy, easy one to do. (And I think I hit the wrong slide. Here we go.) So when you click on that www.iriscenter.com, this is the opening page that you will find. And actually, on the eighteenth when we do the Web tour, we will walk through each of these pages live. But this is where you would start, the opening page, and as Naomi mentioned, you can see there are a variety of resources here available: the Web tours, the resources, resources for instructors, and then always the place highlights new materials. Once you've clicked on "Resources," you will end up here at the *Resource Locator*. And this is where we'll start today. You can notice that the RTI—let me get that little arrow— the RTI is highlighted and that we're going to then click on "All Materials" and that will bring up all of the materials over here in this column. And so we're starting today actually with *RTI Part 1*, the overview.

Julie: So we're now on Slide 19.

Sylvia: And we're on Slide 19, and we'll talk briefly before we go through the actual cycle of what some of the real benefit of some of these modules is that it brings the RTI content expert to you. You don't have to go to a conference to hear them. You have an opportunity to hear those nuggets of wisdom that only those who have actually implemented and worked with different populations in implementing RTI can bring you. Throughout the module, we have these little clips from the RTI experts really sharing on that specific content area. In addition to the experts, we also have the voices of RTI experts. So Kathy Strunk—even though you can't hear her today because she's home sick—you can hear her in these modules. Then we also have the classroom teachers, and so we are able to learn from them, you know, the processes that they have gone through in implementing the RTI model. When we look at the sequence of the modules you can see that they are very thorough. We start with an overview then looking at the essential piece of assessment...the two...the classroom assessment module, the two right there are those that will be highlighted in depth on February 18. Then we also focus on reading instruction and progress monitoring through reading instruction. And then how do we put it together? And the latest module is this *RTI Part 5*, which is really that closer look at Tier 3, where we have to go through that decision making process around special education eligibility. In addition, there is that module for administrators that really looks at that bigger picture, that essential school leadership vision piece that the Center on Instruction has identified as one of those essential components. So—and we'll be going a little more in depth with each of these today, later in the Webinar— so, when we start with the module, there are consistent storylines and characters. We're always looking at Rosa Parks Elementary School, and we're working with these teachers that are making decisions in their S-team, and, you know, it could be your students study team. It is that problem-solving team that really looks at students and their particular needs. What we find here are meaningful, practical, applicable strategies that teachers and their S-team members, those specialists, those resources, really have to work through in problem solving with kids. And you'll see our struggling readers. It'll be coming up here in just a second.

Julie: This is Slide 23, for those who following along, PPT only. We're at Slide 23.

Sylvia: And so, through these case studies and these modules, we followed these specific students, really helping schools and school staff to understand that different students have different....it really does simulate what teachers have in their own classrooms. You know, where Megan is monitored, she's in Tier 1. She's one of those benchmark kids; she's showing improvement. And DeJuan is receiving Tier 2, and after twelve weeks he's really showing some improvement. And then we have LaToya and Ryan. They're getting Tier 2 or strategic intervention, and they show some progress. And then there's Jack and Laney, who are those kids who haven't responded, and what is it as a teacher that you will do with those students? And so we follow those students throughout these modules.

In the administrative module, we're looking really at a different hypothetical school and at Mr. Irwin, the principal. And I found these modules, this module was very beneficial. In addition, it provides you with tools that you can use with your school staff in looking at, you know, how are we, *where* are we with our readiness? What pieces do we have in place? And you can look at the model of what Mayflower school did and really use that, use their modeling or their example to look at what you would do at your own school. And so this is a very, very beneficial model. When we look at how these modules were built…

Julie: Slide 25.

Sylvia: …we're looking at the STAR Legacy…kind of *How People Learn* theory developed by John Bransford. And it really does look at adult learners, and the fact that we have to develop an inquiry cycle in order to anchor learning. People need to want to have to answer a question in order to pursue this information. And I think for adult learners, especially, they want to feel like their time—which is like money—needs to have been spent in a very positive way. And so this cycle…really it is in a *Challenge*…we come up with questions. We see that typical problem in a classroom and then come up with questions on how we could possibly solve those problems. The Thoughts gives us a chance really to link to prior knowledge and then think about, "What is it that I need to know in order to problem solve through these problems or processes?" And the *Perspectives & Resources* really are how they can access that relevant content, and I think what I really like about these modules is that it's nuggets of information. It's sometimes text, and sometimes it's interviews, and sometimes it's games, or it's little movie video clips. But in a variety of ways we're able to provide that content in a very interactive and quick way.

And then as we move from *Perspectives & Resources* to *Assessment*, it really gives teachers or anyone who's really gone through the module an opportunity to apply what they know. The questions are related to the content, but they may also do some interactive activities like plotting, you know, a student's results on a graph and drawing a trend line. So it is very interactive. The *Wrap Up* is really a way to summarize, but it goes back to those initial inquiry questions. And, really, what you're looking for is the difference. Because in the *Challenge*, I didn't know the answer, I didn't know how to work through this, but by the *Wrap Up*, through what you learned through the modules, hopefully you'll find a difference in the way that you answered the questions.

So we're going to start with the *Challenge* and give you an example. And this is where we're actually going to go and watch this video. So, Julie, I'm going to let you…

Julie: Right. So thanks, everyone. I'm going to push out a Website for those who are on the Webinar. It will show up on your desktop. You will see this screen that Sylvia just showed you. And when that, when you see that, please click on the video and play it. It's two and a half minutes long. Presenters, if you could hit Star 6 and mute your phone so that we don't hear your playback. When you've finished listening to

the videos, please come back and hit the check box and let us know that you're ready to continue. If you have any problems during the video, please be patient, and you can view it after the event. So I'm just going to do that now. You should see it on your screen coming up. And please hit "Play" and play the video as it shows up on your screen. You can see the *Challenge, Part 1: Overview*. It might take a little time to show up on your screen. It's a QuickTime. It's two and a half minutes. And we'll go into quiet mode as you click on that to play and listen to that.

Julie (resuming): Thank you. I see that a few people are ready. We'll wait for another minute or two. Thanks for your patience. Those folks can watch it tomorrow or as part of the archive.

Julie (resuming): Okay, Sylvie, I think we should commence. Everyone's looking, like, I think we have a lot of the people who could view it.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think they're coming back.

Julie: Yes, so, folks, again this is going to be archived. You can go on your own time and listen to it. I will still push in a link that shows up in the chat area that you might also be able to click on and watch it if the Webinar did not show up in your area. Remember if some of you are probably having filters that block out some of these pieces, so we should move on now to Slide 28.

Sylvia: Okay. And as you can see…I mean, there again, we're trying to make sure, make the learning very applicable. Those are common problems at every school site. And the thoughts are really a time to reflect on those questions that really ended that particular challenge. And so these are the questions that drive the instruction through the rest of the module. And as we move on to the next piece of *Perspectives & Resources*, this is where those questions will be answered. And so some examples of the *Perspectives & Resources* that we'll find—again trying to keep the nuggets of information in an interactive manner—there may be audio interviews, classroom video examples, sample lesson plans, sample center activities, scheduling help, and a number of people said that scheduling is an issue for them. Along with interactive activities, to do those check for understandings and letting teachers actually apply what they've learned. So this next slide is really an example of what the *Perspectives & Resources* outline is, and if you will notice those same questions that were part of the *Challenge* is really the outline for the content that is covered throughout this particular module.

Julie: For those of you who are watching the video, if you're lost, you can always close down the screen, minimize it, and then you'll come back with the Webinar showing up.

Sylvia: Okay. This is the outline for this particular *Challenge* that we saw. Again, doing those questions that were posed by the teachers at Rosa Parks. And we're not going to actually go through the content today, although this is an excellent module,

and I just recommend everyone go back and walk through this on your own time. We're going to move through what some of these *Perspectives & Resources* might look like. Some of it is text information. As you can see, it's a nugget of information. It's kept very short. The important pieces are in knock-out boxes, so there is an example of text information. We also have opportunities to hear from the experts again and have those expert interviews kind of interspersed throughout the *Perspectives & Resources*. There's also videos. Now, don't click "Play" on this because this is just a screen shot, but we can actually watch teachers in action as they're implementing some of these strategies in for level in tiered instruction their classrooms.

I just think that this is so practical. There are sample lesson plans that teachers can use, and it's kind of small here to see, but I mean it's how you would adjust this instruction for your benchmark, your strategic, and your intensive groups. Along with even specific lesson planning tools—it's very practical, and so there are sample lesson plans, sample center activities. So when teachers really struggle with, "Well, how do I do this small-group, targeted instruction. What do I do with the rest of my first graders?" here are sample center activities as a way to keep those first graders learning as the teacher is providing that direct small group instruction and for teachers who are really struggling with that scheduling help. This is the first time they've done something like this. Here's an example of how you'd set up the room and how many minutes you'd do each center and how much time the teacher would have to do that small-group instruction. And there also are interactive activities. A quick check for understanding—we know a good pedagogy that we are frequently stopping to do a check for understanding—so this is one of those interactive activities, where the teachers drag and drop to see how much they have actually learned so far, and this happens throughout the actual module. So there's frequent checks for understanding.

Here's another interactive activity where Phoebe the math-phobic teacher actually learns to calculate slope. And it's very hands-on and interactive, and if she does it wrong, it lets her know that she needs to go back and try again. Again, a very practical way to learn. And, I mean, nobody's watching you. If you make a mistake, no one knows except for you because you're working on this. Once we've gone through the resources and perspectives, we'll move along to the *Assessment* piece. And there's a variety of different ways that assessment is done. And so here's some sample assessments. As I've mentioned before, some of them are very interactive, where you're actually working on, you know, developing these graphs on your own. And you're plotting scores, and you're creating a trend line and you're monitoring how a student is doing in relation to that trend line. So it's all very practical assessments. So those are some sample assessments. Then the *Wrap Up* brings you back to those initial questions. There's a sample *Wrap Up*, and it really gives you a chance to reflect on those initial questions. And, remember, Mr. Hess had some questions about his one struggling reader, and now we're looking at answering those questions, and, hopefully, teachers will see the difference between how they answered them before the module and how they answered at the end of the module,

so that they don't feel like they have wasted their time. So that's just an example of the variety of instruction that's happening within a particular module. So we're going to move on to a poll.

Julie: Sylvia, can you tell people what slide we're up to, please?

Sylvia: See, I have 44. I didn't know that you and I are matching up. We're on the "How would you use these resources in your professional development?" It's an open-ended poll. I'll give you a few minutes to think about that. Just type in your answers and hit "Submit."

Julie (resuming): Thanks, everyone, for responding. So if you could finish up now, we have about 57 people on the poll who have responded. Publish that in the next ten seconds. So if you can finish writing, we can push out the responses.

Sylvia: So, Naomi, there are several questions about how long the modules take. And, I mean, just in my experience, I'm thinking about 45 minutes. But you have more familiarity, so what would you say?

Naomi: You know, I was just typing that—so this is easier. It varies by module. RTI 1, definitely, you can finish that in 30–45 minutes. Some of the other modules, some of the progress monitoring or *Assessment (Part 4): Putting it all Together*—if somebody actually goes through and works through all the activities and actually does all the different learning, takes advantage of all the different learning opportunities, it can take, you know, two-and-a-half, maybe three hours to work through. If you just kind of skim through, then it's much shorter, obviously.

Sylvia: Okay.

Julie: Okay, thank you. I'll just publish those for you now.

Sylvia: Great. Thank you, Julie.

Julie: So…nobody…these are now published for you and Naomi, presented to scroll through. Somebody said, "I'm not sure at this time," "To provide school staff with as much as support as possible." And someone mentioned that, "We would train administrators and facilitators on the RTI team, who would then in turn train the rest of the school site staff."

Sylvia: So it looks like a lot of people would organize them at the school-site level, which I think that…it would be really good for that, especially if you could get your grade-level teams to really talk about ways that they could use the instructional strategies, the ways that they could even use the classroom organization pieces that are in there to strengthen their instruction and maybe even create more specific homogenous groupings to provide that more-targeted instruction. So I'm glad to see

that a lot of these responses are about use at the school-site level. Anything else you notice, Naomi or Donna or Debbie?

Naomi: There was a question about, "Are we linked to or working with the National Center on RTI?" And, yes, when we developed these modules, we worked with folks before that center was even funded. Those were some of the experts that we worked with: Lynn and Doug Fuchs, Daryl Miller. And these materials are also linked on their sites as training resources.

Donna: Because the modules…this is Donna…because the modules are so user-friendly, you can use them in a variety of ways. You can take them all the way down to the school level and allow small groups, or you can do the "train the trainers" kind of approach. They lend themselves to a lot of variety and ways of doing things. Sylvia: And you can really see that, even in the responses, that it looks like there are different ways that people would be using them. Well, I'm going to quickly cover the modules, what the content in each of the modules. I appreciate your input, and we'll take a better look at those after the Webinar. But really look at what's in these modules. Very briefly, we want to get to the implementers and let them talk a little bit about that. When we look at *RTI (Part 1)*—that overview where we watched the *Challenge* Cycle—this really is an overall…covers the overall benefit of RTI, the different RTI approaches, and really focuses on that discussion about specific learning disabilities determination using an RTI model, and I found in this one there were very effective graphs that helped teachers clearly understand responsiveness and non-responsiveness. And that often is that…is a question about, "Well, how do I know? How do we know if I continue to provide intervention? How do we know if this is working?" And this module really covers that.

Part 2 has even more good assessment information. Data-driven decision making is one of those essential components of effective RTI, and this module really looks at the role of assessment in RTI and how assessment will look different at the different tiers, as well as, you know, for decisions about what level of intervention a student should receive. But also how teachers can use assessment data to make decisions around instruction. *RTI (Part 3)* really focuses on reading instruction, and it really looks at tiered reading intervention and instruction practices, reading instruction prevention—and I saw someone had a question about pre-school there—reading instruction for prevention and then also, based upon data, what type of intervention: How do we provide that targeted intervention even in that good first general education classroom? And this module covers that around reading intervention.

Module four really looks at the nuts-and-bolts of supporting successful implementation, including that collaboration piece, problem solving, and effective instructional practices. It really also looks at how to coordinate assessment procedure, and how do you really fit that into a busy school day? The newest module, *Part 5*, tackles the common issues around Tier 3 or intensive intervention. It has a very close look at data and progress monitoring and instructional practices,

as well as then using that data around decisions on what constitutes further intervention or a special education referral. And those are issues that everyone implementing RTI face. The *RTI: Considerations for School Leaders* really looks at that essential leadership piece that the administration really holds that central role in implementing RTI at the site. It focuses on the clear understanding of the stages of implementation. This one has some very excellent tools for looking at readiness and where your school is now and where they need to go next. So in looking at the modules I have briefly covered, does anyone have any questions or comments on that information?

Julie: Sylvia, there are some questions in the chat area about research and RTI in the secondary level. "How long is the administrator module?" "Considering the budget crisis, do your modules utilize maybe extra personnel needed to teach at the school site?" These are some of the questions coming through. I don't really know how you'd like to address those.

Sylvia: Okay, well, with the budget crisis: It really talks…these modules really focus on good classroom instruction at that Tier 1 level, and Tier 2, also looking at using your general education resources. So it really isn't about a lot of extra people coming in and doing intervention. It's about how you as a classroom teacher—as we can see, Mr. Hess is that third-grade teacher—how can he as a classroom teacher really provide that targeted instruction for that specific student? The administrator module, Naomi, do you have an idea on how long that one takes?

Naomi: I think that one probably takes an hour, hour and a half. That module actually addresses administrative issues of budget. You know, how…what kind of funding you would need to look at, what are some ways to access additional resources if you wanted to implement the RTI model? That would be a good one to look at.

Sylvia: In response to the high school question: We did a Webinar series in May here at SchoolsMovingUp, and we did have a high school present really on their particular model and how it worked at Riverbank High School here in California. But also the National High School Center also has resources on how we really implement RTI at the secondary level.

Julie: Okay, I'm just going to quickly publish some of these. I'm sure we might even be able to do an FAQ if we can't get to all of the questions.

Naomi: "Modules for math." Yeah, we've been getting a lot of requests for those. And that could be one that comes on eventually, that we'll be developing eventually.

Sylvia: Okay. And the question about if it's at school level, or can the individual teacher implement: I think as an individual teacher, it's very hard because it is about collaboration. I have seen grade levels implement because it is about collaboration and sharing students and targeting instruction. But, ideally, it's school-wide so that

you have that leadership and support from that administrator. Any comments out there from you implementers?

Donna: We agree with what you just said. It is…it's going to have to be clusters of grades or an individual grade if it's a large school, because it requires so much teamwork. And it requires enough rearranging of resources that one individual out there is not going to be able to do it by themselves.

Sylvia: There was a question during recognition and responses: "Have you considered looking at all or any at pre-schools?"

Naomi: We don't have a lot for pre-schools, but there is a wonderful new project that was just funded, Project Connect at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill at the Frank Porter Graham Center. [Inaudible question from audience] IRIS does, but from birth through early childhood, early elementary. I would look and see if they start developing materials on that.

Julie: Well, thank you, everyone, for your questions and for sharing that information. I will post in the archive to the high-school RTI resources. For those of you who signed up, we listed a lot of the related materials that SchoolsMovingUp has on the Website. You'll find links to those resources, as well as some other materials and online events we've done around RTI.

Sylvia: And, I think, Julie, that some of these questions are going to be answered by Donna and by Debbie as they talk about their implementation processes. One of the last links here is, you know, "How do you [inaudible] staff?" And I think as you've been through that process you know how to do that. And I think we can do a kind of Q&A kind of log so that we do answer these questions, but we don't have time to answer them all right now. And I think we can post that up along with these materials.

Julie: Definitely. So thank you, everyone, for your sharing, and if you have any solutions that you're doing, please also type them into the chat. As we say, we try to get people networking with one another and also sharing some of their strategies and resources.

Sylvia: All right, and, Naomi, it looks like you're up to introduce your colleagues there.

Julie: So we're up to Slide 53. Thank you, for those who are following along.

Naomi: All right, well, we've got Donna Parker and Debbie Williams here. Donna Parker is the redhead in the picture that some of you are looking at now, and as Sylvia mentioned earlier, Donna is with the Tennessee State Department of Education and has held many hats over the years with that department and has worked a lot, as far as implementation of programs across the state of Tennessee.

She'll be talking first, and then Debbie will come in and speak specifically about how Hardeman County in Tennessee began from the ground up implementing the RTI process in that district.

Julie: So we're at Slide 54, and, Donna, I'm pushing your photo out.

Donna: All right.

Julie: So thank you, and, Donna, we're on Slide 55. And Donna's going to be speaking about implementation.

Donna: Kathy wanted me to talk about leadership, and I'm going to talk about statewide leadership. And then Debbie, when she takes over, she's going to talk some about what it's like being in an individual school system. So between us, hopefully, we can cover some of your concerns. But Kathy did want me to talk a little bit about what's it like implementing this at the state level.

A little bit of background: About five years ago, Tennessee went into a process of examining our philosophy about students as apart of a project through Mid-South Regional Resource Center. We brought in people from the LEA to sit down with us and help construct what I think ended up being mandates for the state department. LEA told us the direction they wanted us to head in. This culminated in a document called *Closing the Achievement: All Students, Our Students*. I won't go into details of that document, but the title of that document says it all—the *All Students, Our Students* part of it. Local practitioners implemented most of the main elements in RTI, but they did not use those terms. They told the state department, this is how we want all children treated in the classroom; this is how we want to work together. This is how the results that we want to get and the way we want to go about it. So at that point in Tennessee, we had just gotten approved a state improvement of professional development. In looking at the type of professional development that we needed to have developed—recommendations of closing the achievement gap, *All Students, Our Students*—we had some of the leading people in the U.S. right in our backyard, and that was Peabody, Vanderbilt, and the IRIS Center.
So we did develop an agreement with them (inaudible). Now, as far as how the state has handled implementation, if you will look at—not now, later—when you look at that last module, *Considerations for School Leaders*, you will see the same process that we went through on a state-level outline, because we had to go through step-by-step to have the type of implementation that we felt like was going to be successful. We would consider our state as partially implemented. There are no mandates for this occurring. There are no statewide mandates other than—I'll talk about it at the end—our LD guidelines, and the regulations on the identifications of learning disabilities pushes this along. But the first thing we had to do on a state level is the first thing mentioned in that module: We had to become informed. We had to go out and scout for leaders. We did that in a way that we allowed natural leaders to surface for us. We generated a lot of interest and awareness. We did not put a great deal of pressure on people. We allowed people to come to us and say

they were interested, and then we organized groups of people that way. We went from our division of special education. We also scouted our colleagues at the state department. We solicited their help and support during that process. We spent a lot of time and effort developing personal relationships with people and developing trust and gathering up support that way. So we had our own colleagues at the state department, then, and then we were also doing outreach into the school systems across the state of Tennessee and allowing people to step up on their own accord. I did see one of the questions talked about: "How do you do this with people who are resistant?" There are many, many teachers who are resistant, and I'm sure Debbie can talk about some personal experience in that department. Let me tell you what else, when you have the basic philosophy right, there's a natural way that people step up and take a hold of that, and that's what's happened in Tennessee. Because the naysayers are watching people around them implement, they have gotten quieter and more receptive. And that's the process that we have allowed to happen—going after those natural leaders and the people who just emerge from this. It does take a very, very special type of leadership to pull this off because the initiative is so large and requires so much change on the local level. You have to realize it's going to tax every people-skill that you have. You've got to be able to have those skills to make groups work together, to drop the territory, to do things entirely different, and to allow people to have their job descriptions rewritten, even to that level. All those things are threatening, so you've got to be the leader that's going to develop the trust so people will allow you to do that with them.

Sylvia: And, Donna, something that the Center on Instruction has pointed out, you can't make people do something they don't want to do. Just like you said, they talked about, get that vanguard group that will do it. And then people will watch them go, "Gee, they are working smarter, not harder," you know, "What they're doing makes sense." And I think that's how we answer the question, well, how do we get those resistors?

Donna: Right. That's right. And we went out—just like it says in the module—we went out and presented our case to in-house colleagues, the people in the state department, and then we went out with a lot of awareness across the state. The IRIS Center helped us with that. In the meantime, we did a lot of assessing our own readiness for doing this, and in the process we felt like we were kind of modeling for LEAs because we really promoted doing their own needs assessment and taking a good, hard look where they really are in the process before they bite off more that they can chew.

During this budget crisis, there have been some points where we have taken a step back or at least paused in what we were doing to let some fallout occur and then move forward from there. But, while we might have paused for a while, a lot of LEAs have just proceeded, and they've done it by way of sitting down and reorganizing their resources, and Debbie's here, from a local system, nodding her head in agreement with that. Once that belief occurs—and sometimes there's a time delay

on that—but once it occurs, people will seem to take hold, and they'll take hold of some of their problems that come up along the way.

Sylvia: Well and, Debbie, what are some of the ways that people realign resources, because that is a common question? We don't have money. We don't have more bodies. How do we make this happen?

Debbie: A lot of systems are going to go in there and look at what they have already in house. What are they using and are they using it effectively and to the benefit to the student and the teacher? An example of that would be that there are many programs out there that are good programs, but the teachers aren't using it effectively or using the data it supplies, so it's really of no benefit. And what they have to do is gather those resources together, put it down on paper, and say, "How are we using this, and does it benefit us?" In our situation in Hardeman County, we sat our first year out with zero budget for the most part. We did purchase the universal screening, but that was our only purchase. We used what we had in house and we learned to use our resources effectively.

Sylvia: And I think, sometimes, it takes thinking outside of the box, where you may have a great trained teacher, who is a teacher on special assignment, who you find is counting out assessment; where there is a clerical person that could be counting the test booklets, and they could be providing good targeted instruction if people just think outside of the box of what their role has always been.

Donna: Right. That's correct. We took the time in Tennessee to gain real commitment before we moved ahead. I mean, it's kind of a no-brainer, but at the same time it's kind of a warning that you had better do that or you're in for trouble. We watched implementation constantly, and we do our best, in that where the trouble spots are, and we list that. Anyone who is implementing on a local level, when they gather groups together, they definitely need to have some cynical, negative members of that group. So those are the people that keep you honest. Don't gather up a group that is all going to agree with you, or you won't get anywhere. So we try…we try to be open-minded enough. We believe in what we're doing enough that we have thick skins, as far as the negative part goes. And also we have the IRIS Center and the modules as our base of operations. That helps take some of the heat off of us, but at the same time it's the old adage that someone independent, listen to them but they might not listen to you. So it's a partnership type of a thing. We have heavily promoted handouts, quality professional development. And, see, the modules are there for anyone to use. Again, at the same time, we've done a lot of train-the-trainers work around the use of the modules. And the State Improvement Grant has consultants that go in and do very specific training. We have Hardeman County, who's here—this is Debbie—as a demonstration site for the state. We've done numerous presentations to principals and administrators and then presentations to teachers and at all conferences possible, so there's a lot of information going out there. The SIG Grant has developed parent partnerships that have been a great benefit in this area, too. We…if you'll look at your slide (I'm almost

through)…you'll see baby steps or giant leaps. The premise of that is we have had to slow people down. We want…we want people to slow down and do it right, rather than speed up and have to stop what they're doing and reorganize. I had said before that Tennessee's LD standards are keeping this ball rolling and part of that is because you all know the regulations—they promote RTI approaches. Then we require RTI plans to be submitted and approved before we let people use RTI for identification of learning disabilities. Now Debbie is going to talk to you about the local level.

Sylvia: Donna, can I ask you a question? You mentioned the parent piece, how—I mean that is also a very common question we are faced with—how do we keep parents involved and parents informed? What were some of the things that you did in Tennessee?

Donna: Well, we are used to any type of policy development. We're used to having parent representatives in there. But the LD standards build in that parent communication, and our communication on the state level, with our parents advocacy groups, there's a kind of an unsaid agreement that they're allowing us to implement this and see how it goes for kids. So there was a lot of trust there that had been built up by other people at other times.

Sylvia: Okay, that's helpful.

Donna: Now, Debbie…

Debbie: I am, I'm really excited to be here to share about Hardeman County. And I think you might be interested, the listeners might be interested to know that Hardeman County is in the southwest corner of Tennessee, and it is a rural county. We have about 5,000 students. Our first year of implementation, we focused on kindergarten through third grade. We're housed in six different schools spread across the county. The RTI process in Hardeman County is called HEART, which stands for "Hardeman Empowering Achievement Response Team." Not that we didn't want to use those three letters [RTI], but for some reason they scared teachers. So having said that, I also want to say that the first part, before you ever implement the RTI process, leadership is very, very important.

I might want to tell you where I started, and thank goodness for IRIS and our State Improvement Grant in Tennessee. Before I began the process in Hardeman County, I spent days studying the IRIS Center Modules by myself, sitting down in front of the computer, making notes, and writing out a process. And that was probably the most helpful thing I did for myself. The second thing that helped make Hardeman County very successful is the fact that we worked hand-in-hand with the State Improvement Grant consultant. We probably wouldn't be where we are today if we weren't using these resources available to us.

Talking about the leadership and being able to pick up your speed with the right support, we had a superintendent that had a vision. He started probably a year before implementation in Hardeman County on studying the process and what it can do for Hardeman County in helping the students close the achievement gap. He also brought on board his director of instruction and his supervisors and principals and started planting a seed with them. You know, in the larger districts, I know that the superintendent may not be the leading person there, and it may be someone else. It doesn't matter if it's the superintendent in the larger systems or not. You have to have somebody at the top who is willing to take responsibility and commit to what's going to go on in the district when you start this implementation.

A prime example of this, from Hardeman County, is that the teachers started calling our superintendent immediately, asking for transfers, threatening to quit…you know, "Get rid of this, Debbie Williams!" But the reason is that there is a fear of the unknown, and change is very difficult, and teachers need to know what the purpose is of what they're being asked to do. So why? They need to see the whole picture and they need to believe that they have the skill to be successful with it. And if they don't have those things, when they close the doors to their classrooms, they're not going to implement it the way you want it do be done. So it's very important that your head person, whether it be the superintendent or someone else, is there to back you up 100 percent. I'm very lucky to have Dr. Hopper and Gene Ross to do that for me. Otherwise, I could not have done that process in our school system.

Sylvia: And, Debbie, I'm looking at the, you know, if it isn't the superintendent—and I'm just thinking out here in California—it could be your curriculum and instruction directors, and it could be your program improvement.

Debbie: Exactly.

Sylvia: It may even be your assessment people who realize that an RTI structure and model is going to improve their assessment, will bring a school out of program improvement, and will provide good instruction in curriculum and instruction. So you may not always get to the superintendent being that leader, but some of these other district leaders might be the people who are bringing it down to the principal. Debbie: Yes, that's exactly right. Our system is so small, and our superintendent is very approachable. The larger districts, you may not have that. But you've got to have someone in the district who is willing to take on the challenge and put some things on the back burner and put on the front burner those immediate challenges that an RTI challenge is going to cause. Another thing is that the training for the teachers is so vital, it's got to be ongoing. In fact, it's got to be the first thing that you do with the teachers. I see that someone wrote in that they had a group of teachers that actually went to different districts to actually look at the process being implemented. And we have had many districts coming to Hardeman County, and we're happy to be a model for them, and we sent some out before we started as well. But professional development is so very, very important. So man of our districts, we

want to provide motivational speakers for our teachers to get them hyped up before the beginning of the school year and motivate them, and that is very important, too. What I have discovered is that our teachers need training that is going to help them become effective teachers. No matter how you look at this process, it is based on effective instruction. If our teachers don't know what effective instructions look like then they're not going to know what to do in their classroom. So they have to be trained constantly on what research says is the best instruction, and the best way to deliver the instruction. Training has been very, very important in Hardeman County. And the way that we have done that is, the first year of implementation, we had very, very strong facilitators in each school. And I would bring them into our central office every week for a full day of training. Some weeks it would just be me, and other weeks we would have our State Improvement Grant consultant, Candy Smith, with us, who has been a wealth of knowledge for us. But our facilitators were trained weekly. And our facilitators would go back to the schools and train the staff weekly. When did they do this? Well, we can't do it during the school day because there's not enough time. But they were willing to stay after school to get this training. You know, one thing about…especially with elementary teachers…they do have a passion for what they do, and they also want to be the best. And they're the ones who will scream the loudest, as well, when they don't understand what is expected of them. But they only scream the loudest because they want to know exactly what the research says, exactly what they're supposed to be doing…"So just tell us!"

Julie: Hey, Deb, there's a question in here about from someone saying, "What were the facilitators trained on?"

Debbie: Oh, my goodness! Well let me just…

Julie: I know we're in sort of…on a time crunch here, but I wanted to get that one in there.

Debbie: I actually have a list on RTI training. If we have whole-day training then we'd certainly take advantage of that. But our training started with classroom management. If you don't have classroom management, you cannot have effective instruction. You have to have that, and you have to show the teachers how to teach it to the children because you have to have a procedure. You have to have a routine, and you have to have rules. So that's our first professional development that we will do every year. And then, you know, teachers know what the five elements of reading are because that has been screamed at them for years and years. But what we discovered is that they don't necessarily know how to teach the five elements of reading. So we had training on each one of the elements to make sure that they understood exactly what they were and how to deliver that instruction in a direct, explicit way.

The other thing is, you cannot expect your teachers to know how to build centers. We are asking them to have an effective Tier 1 class, which is the most important part of the RTI process. Your Tier 1. In that Tier 1, your teacher is the cornerstone.

That teacher has to be effective, so we're asking them to implement that whole-group instruction and then do a rotation with literacy centers, grounded in the five elements in reading and then have a small-group instruction, which is going to be the most important part of your Tier 1 classroom, because that's going to be where you teach the mastery. You're going to hone up those skills, and you're going to help those children close achievement gaps. But they have to know that before they can implement it, so that have to build centers that will not just be a babysitting spot for the children, but where they will learn from one another, and it will be an accountable process for them. You know, I've had people ask me, "Well, okay, we can do our centers, and we are going to group them." Well, we don't want our children grouped homogeneously into centers, because we want the children to learn from one another, because research tells us that kids will learn more from their peers than they actually will learn from their teachers a lot of times.

So these are little things that we might assume that our teachers know, but they don't know. They don't know. They don't know that when they pull kids to a small-group table to work with them, that those groups should be pulled homogeneously, so you can hone in the skills that that group of kids need. But the centers should be heterogeneous. So we also train on how to build effective literacy centers. (About ten minutes?) Okay, we have trainings on effective instruction, on best practice strategies, on parent engagement, universal screening, the benchmark test, the progress monitoring, how to read the data, what to do with the data, and how to use the data to drive instruction. All of those are very, very important, and you have to have them, and it has to be ongoing all through the year. We'll say that the tiered instruction is very important. It's been very successful to us. We don't have the money to bring in interventionists. We use our teachers, or we use paraprofessionals that we train very well. A lot of our teachers do their own Tier 2. We feel like it's very good because it can be a continuum across the rest of the day. (I don't want to go over, so I'm checking our minutes.)

Sylvia: We have some questions. There have been some questions that I've been trying to monitor as we go. A lot of them have been geared toward that special ed identification piece. There was a question: "Are you still using a discrepancy model as well in Tennessee, in addition to using RTI?"

Debbie: Well, in Hardeman County we are not using a discrepancy model because we are getting so much incredible data from our Tier 1 and our Tier 2 that we don't need to do the discrepancy model. We know exactly what our kids can do and what they can't do, just from the data that we've received. I believe on the next Webinar, our psychologist is going to share how we are using that data to write up an evaluation for eligibility. But it is giving us the most incredible data. So, no, we are not using the discrepancy model.

Donna: And what we do on the state level is this: It is a voluntary type of a thing. You can submit a plan to the state department to use RTI to identify your LD population, and you can drop the use of the discrepancy model, or you can continue

using the discrepancy model, but our criteria for LD has a lot of the based elements of RTI built into the criteria. You're being pushed along to use most of the basic elements of RTI through the LD criteria. But then, if you want to go ahead with it full blown and drop the use of the discrepancy model, you submit a plan to us, and we review it and make sure you seem to be on target with that and have a quality plan.

Sylvia: We actually have an expert from the Center on Instruction as one of our participants, Katie Packet. So there were several questions around how many states are using an RTI model alone. I just kind of pulling her answers out. She said, "Just like Tennessee, few states rely on solely on an RTI process for determining that learning disabilities eligibility, but they are using that RTI data for decision-making, because very few are really referred outside of RTI, and that, you know, if there is still no response and the data is still unclear then you would move to using more comprehensive and diagnostic assessments." Just to answer those questions that were out there regarding that piece. And do please look at module one, because that really talks about how you make those decisions.

Debbie: An answer to Gerald...asks, "If Hardeman has a standardized S team?" We have HEART teams in every one of our schools. And, yes, we do have forms created. Our HEART manual is on our Hardeman County school Website under "Teacher Resources." It's also on the Tennessee state Website under "Hardeman County," and we do have a lot of forms already created that we're happy to share with others. In regard to migrant students changing schools often, I think in any rural districts, our kids seem to school hop a lot. And for that purpose, our reading in every one of our schools is on a pacing guide that we developed. Every teacher in K–5 will be on the same reading lesson every day. (inaudible) So when our kids do do some school hopping, they're not getting gaps in their learning. They're not going to lose instruction because everyone is in the same pacing guide.

Sylvia: This is a good question: "Has eliminating a discrepancy model and replacing it with an RTI model increased litigation in special education or decreased it?"

Debbie: You know, it has been phenomenal to see what has taken place in Hardeman County by using the RTI model. Our referrals, actually, in our K–3 last year, we received 11. But we were not in fear of failure to identify because these kids were getting incredible intervention. So we were giving them plenty of time. You know, we may keep somebody in Tier 2 for a year or longer because they're making progress. We want to be absolutely sure before we refer to special ed that they truly do need to be in special education. But we're not leaving them behind because during all of this referral process, they're receiving Tier 2, which is an incredible intervention.

Donna: And on the state level, we do not have enough information to predict that impact or not. Right now, there is no litigation surrounding failure to identify that we know of. I mean, there may be some things in process, but there's no huge court cases that we know of.

Sylvia: And there's that last question: "Now that you have some implementation going on, has it reduced or decreased the number of students identified?"

Donna: We, for most people, we hear the number of referrals drop. But we feel like that is going to be a phenomenon where there's a sharp drop and then a gradual increase back to it, kind of an equalized type of thing. Our overall goal, we hope the number of LD students identified in the state decreases, but we don't—you know—we're not in this to decrease referrals. We're in this to provide what kids need.

Debbie: And what we found is, the referrals that we are getting now are truly kids that are having…that do have learning disabilities. We feel like our identification process is much better than it was. And through our universal screening and progress monitoring, we also require our special ed teachers to progress monitor special ed students weekly. We want to make sure that they're progressing, as well, and meeting their goals and objectives. What we found is that we do have special ed kids that are in special ed that really don't need to be in there now because of (inaudible) time, not have effective instruction in the classroom. If your teachers are not buying in to effective instruction, your process will not be valid. So it has got to be checked daily for validity and effectiveness. And we take that very serious in Hardeman. We make no apologies for walking into classrooms on a daily basis to check for that. And, really, our great teachers, they love for you to come in and see what great things they're doing.

Julie: Well, thank you, everybody. This is Julie. I think that we are nearly at our time limit, and we want to honor people's time, so we'd like to just quickly wrap up, and I'm sure that…I really thank everyone for being on the call today, and thank you to the IRIS Center for collaborating, and thank you so much for Donna for stepping in for Kathy and giving us the state's perspective, and for Debbie in giving us a district's perspective. This is a really wonderful conversation, and I hope that we can continue in another format sometime in the near future. Sylvia, thank you for moderating it from the California Comprehensive Center today.

Sylvia: You're Welcome.

Julie: So, as we're moving on, we have the RTI supports. Naomi, do you want to have some parting words on that?

Naomi: Just to reiterate what Sylvia typed in earlier: These resources are there. They're all free. There were a lot of comments in the chat room…in the main room, about behavioral support for kids, and we have an entire module series on behavior, everything from laying the foundation in your classroom behavior management plan, to dealing with destructive and non-compliant behavior. Please look at that, too, in addition to the RTI resources.

Julie: Thank you. The next Webinar, we invite you to come and join in. It is going to be on Thursday the eighteenth. And, as Sylvia explained, it's going to be on progress monitoring. It's actually going to be a Web tour. So we really need to make sure people do the wizard, and we'll do a live application sharing. There will be a script for people to follow along on their own computers. But we really would like for you to be there. Donna, please do continue the great work, and, Debbie, do you have any parting thoughts before we go?

Donna: Thank you. We've enjoyed.

Julie: And Debbie? Any parting thoughts?

Sylvia: For those who won't be able to really be on the Web tour, we will provide a PowerPoint with extensive notes that will let them know that if they can't right then go live, how they can move through those slides at a later time so they can be listening to us and seeing those screen shots that we're talking about.

Julie: Well, thank you, everyone. And thank you, Sylvia. And remember this event is archived, so please share it with other people. We are going to put some of the related information—you can get it from Debbie, her information about some of those examples she shared about the work they're doing. We'll put up some other links, about the polls and any FAQs, and that will be in the event site. So I'm officially now ending the Webinar, and I really thank you for your time. I'm going to push out a quick survey that will show up on your screen. Please take a quick two or three minutes to give us a feedback so we can keep bringing these SchoolsMovingUp online events with such wonderful partners like the IRIS Center. So, thank you, everyone, for presenting today and please come back on the eighteenth, and thank you again for your time.

Sylvia: Thank you, Julie, for organizing it.

Julie: I'm just going to officially end the Webinar. Thank you, Naomi, again, Debbie and Donna.

Naomi: Thank you, Julie, and thank you, Sylvia, for organizing all of this.

Sylvia: You're Welcome. All right.

Julie: And if you can just logout, everybody, I'd appreciate it.

Sylvia: All right. Thanks, Julie. Bye.

Julie: Bye.