# Identifying Students in Need of Support or Intervention

*Center on Instruction*

Students differ in their instructional and support needs, and successful instruction and effective support acknowledges these differences. Screening for skill deficits and monitoring progress at regular intervals are effective ways of identifying students needing support (Elliott & Fuchs, 1997) or intervention beyond the typical instructional program to the extent that selected measures or indicators (1) are aligned with the content being taught, (2) provide reliable and valid information on student status at a point in time or student progress from one point in time (Wanzek et al., in press), and (3) yield timely and useable data that are accessible by SEA, LEA, school, and classroom educators. Screening and progress monitoring measures are well established in reading for early grades (Deno, 2003a, 2003b) and, increasingly, in early mathematics (Clark & Shinn, 2004; Foegen & Deno, 2001; Vanderheyden et al., 2004). Similar measures for higher grade levels (Espin & Deno, 1994; Espin & Tindal, 1994), for content areas other than reading and mathematics, and for non-content areas (school drop-out, behavior) are also emerging.

## Action Principles

### For State

1. Assist LEAs with the selection or adoption of high-quality screening and progress monitoring measures and systems for managing, aggregating, and reporting data.

2. Build LEA capacity related to screening and monitoring by providing targeted and ongoing technical assistance and, when appropriate, large-scale professional development to pre-service and in-service teachers and other school and district personnel on the administration of screening and progress monitoring measures, on efficient and reliable data management, and on the strategic use of data to make decisions about student instructional and support needs.

### For District

1. Support and participate in the identification of reliable and valid screening and progress monitoring measures in cases where measures are not adopted at the SEA level.

2. Provide important ongoing and targeted professional development on these measures and on using resulting data.

3. Consider the use of electronic databases for housing and managing screening and progress monitoring data. They increase accuracy, real-time accessibility, and facilitate the multi-purpose use of data (e.g., identifying effective programs, areas needing additional professional development, etc.).

### For School

1. Implement screening and progress monitoring vertically and horizontally (across grades and within grades).

2. Use screening and progress monitoring data to identify students in need of assistance and to make instructional decisions (e.g., identify skill deficits, differentiate instruction, establish intervention/tutoring groups, etc.). Monitor student progress to ensure that interventions provided to students are effective.

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