

## Research Based Assessment System

### Assessment

Assessment in an RTI model is essential. Ongoing assessments are central to an integrated system of instructional support. In an RTI problem-solving model, assessment is directly linked to several strategic purposes – screening; diagnostics; and progress monitoring.

**Screening** in RTI is an assessment that is provided to all students several times per year with the express purpose of identifying (as early as possible) students who are not making expected progress and to assess the effectiveness of the core curriculum. Students identified through screening are provided with **diagnostic assessments** to ascertain specific skill strengths and deficits. After targeted intervention is provided, **progress monitoring** is employed with students to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and to determine the intensity of interventions and resources needed to support student learning.

An integrated data system that informs decisions at every level of service delivery must have assessment procedures that include nine characteristics. They:

- directly assess the specific skills embodied in state and local academic standards;
- assess “marker variables” that have been demonstrated to lead to the ultimate instructional target (e.g., reading comprehension);
- are sensitive to small increments of growth over time;
- can be administered efficiently over short periods;
- may be administered repeatedly (using multiple forms);
- are readily summarized in teacher-friendly data displays;
- can be used to make comparisons across students;
- can be used to monitor an individual student’s progress over time; and
- have direct relevance to the development of instructional strategies that address the area of need.

The function of assessment in RTI is to identify at-risk students as early as possible, to gather relevant data to support **educational decision making** and to impact what the teacher is doing to improve achievement. The framework of assessment tools must be increasingly sensitive to detect subtle changes in achievement in student performance as assessments move from screening to diagnostics to progress monitoring. Research on Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) is very applicable to RTI and a problem-solving model.