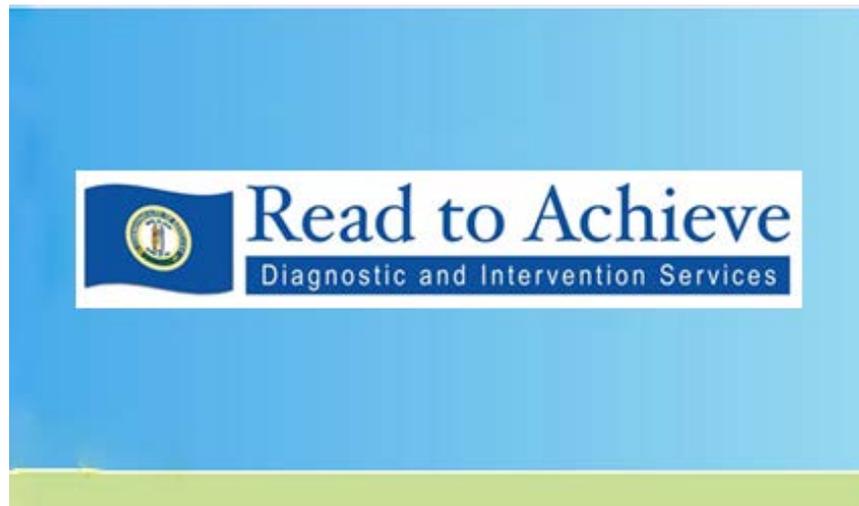

EVALUATION OF KENTUCKY'S READ TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM 2015–2016



October 13, 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Read to Achieve Grant Program (KY RTA) was established in 2005 by the Kentucky General Assembly to help ensure students' reading proficiency by the end of the primary grades. The KY RTA fund imparts renewable, two-year grants to schools primarily for the hiring of an intervention teacher who provides short-term, intensive instruction to students who struggle with reading. In 2015-2016, RTA grants were awarded to 321 elementary schools in 100 county and independent school districts across the state. As part of the KY RTA grant, schools received \$48,500 at the start of the 2015–16 school year. Administrators reported spending most of the grant monies on teachers' salaries; however, for many schools, the KY RTA grant did not cover the full cost of the program. Many administrators reported supplementing the grant funds in order to pay for the KY RTA intervention program. This executive summary includes key findings from the evaluation and provides recommendations for future implementation of RTA. The report is organized as follows:

Chapter 1:

- Background
- Funding
- Program requirements
- Prior evaluation findings and recommendations

Chapter 2:

- Overview of evaluation plan
- Current research questions
- Data sources

Chapter 3:

- RTA teachers and their roles within the RTA program

Chapter 4:

- RTA students and how they experience the RTA program
- Student achievement outcomes

Chapter 5:

- Comparison of RTA grant-approved intervention programs

Chapter 6:

- Closer look at RTA implementation desk audit findings

Chapter 7:

- Perceptions of RTA teachers, classroom teachers and administrators about RTA program

Chapter 8:

- Summary of key findings, limitations and recommendations

OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation for 2015-2016 looks at detailed information about how schools are implementing the KY RTA program statewide. The impact of the RTA program on student reading growth is also included. The evaluation is guided by the following questions:

RTA TEACHERS

- Who are the RTA teachers and what is the relationship among RTA teachers and other shareholders?
- What are classroom teacher and administrators' perceptions of RTA teachers' roles and responsibilities as a part of the school system?

RTA STUDENTS

- Who are they and what is a typical RTA student experience?

OUTCOMES

- How does RTA students' performance on assessments compare to national norms?

INTERVENTION PROGRAM COMPARISON

- Which intervention programs are being used?
- What are teachers' level of training and confidence by program?

BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF THE RTA PROGRAM

- What are perceptions of benefits and barriers of RTA programs across RTA teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators?

A CLOSER LOOK AT IMPLEMENTATION

- How does implementation vary across RTA schools?
- What characteristics of implementation are consistently seen in top performing RTA schools?

KEY FINDINGS

Data to answer questions about implementation and student outcomes comes from statewide surveys of RTA teachers, administrators and classroom teachers in RTA schools. An optional 3rd year grant extension desk audit provides additional information about all 320 schools with a focus on high performing schools. Fall and spring MAP scores, from a sample of RTA students, provide student outcome data.

RTA TEACHERS AND THEIR ROLES

KEY FINDINGS:

- RTA teachers are experienced educators with advanced degrees with most having over four years of experience in RTA.

- RTA teachers are assuming many literacy roles in their schools and are viewed as schoolwide literacy leaders by classroom teachers and administrators.
- Classroom teachers report strong collaboration with RTA teachers with most collaboration occurring on a daily basis.
- RTA teachers are part of literacy decision-making teams which often include classroom teachers and principals.
- Most RTA teachers report they would like to increase their impact by sharing their literacy knowledge with other teachers.

RTA STUDENT EXPERIENCES

KEY FINDINGS:

- RTA enables schools to serve thousands of primary-aged students who are struggling with reading. A total of 10,298 students were served in RTA intervention programs in the 2015-2016 academic year.
- An average of 33 intervention students are served by each RTA program, with half of RTA programs serving all primary grades. Most students begin RTA interventions within the first three weeks of school.
- Most RTA students receive daily instruction in 30 minute blocks, individually or in groups of less than five students.
- More RTA students successfully exited their RTA interventions this year than last year. In particular, high performing RTA schools appear to be exiting students from interventions more frequently.

RTA PROGRAM USE

KEY FINDINGS:

- RTA Programs provide different amounts of training to their RTA teachers with some interventionists receiving extensive, on-going training. Most high performing schools use Reading Recovery, the intervention that provides the most training throughout the school year.
- The majority of RTA programs use only grant-approved intervention programs. Across the board, RTA teachers report relatively high levels of confidence in teaching interventions.
- Still, some RTA schools continue to use non-grant approved reading intervention programs and practices with at least some students. The RTA teachers continue to receive training in these programs and express more confidence in teaching them than in teaching most grant-approved interventions.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS:

- Student outcome data indicates that RTA students in grades Kindergarten, 2nd grade and 3rd grade are making overall greater gains than predicted average growth and are closing achievement gaps. Kindergarten, 2nd and 3rd grade RTA students show significantly higher growth than national normed growth.

BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF RTA

KEY FINDINGS:

- RTA grant programs help students become more confident and excited about reading as they make gains in their reading proficiency.
- Schools benefit from having a literacy expert who supports literacy best practices in the school.
- Not all struggling readers receive RTA services due to varying constraints of the programs and limitations of school resources.
- The majority of RTA schools supplement grant funds in order to pay for the RTA program or teachers. Administrators recognize that funding challenges affect which teachers they hire and how these teachers are trained.

COMPARING HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS

KEY FINDING:

- In desk audits, high performing schools mirror many of the characteristics of high implementation identified in previous evaluations, providing further support for these key characteristics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUE TO OFFER THE KY RTA GRANT PROGRAM AT RTA SCHOOLS. Overwhelmingly, shareholders express student need exceeding program capacity. RTA teachers are not always able to reach all students who needed the intervention services. Expanded funding is needed to reach more students.

COMMON ASSESSMENT. Due to RTA schools using a wide variety of reading assessments, only 3964 of 10,298 RTA students (those with MAP scores) are included in the analysis of student achievement outcomes. A common reading assessment, used by all RTA schools, would allow evaluators to more accurately measure the impact of the RTA program on student reading achievement. Additionally, a common assessment would clarify the selection and progress monitoring of RTA students across the state.

NON-GRANT APPROVED INTERVENTIONS. Some schools appear committed to using non-grant approved interventions. Providing additional evidence-based intervention options may encourage schools to find grant-approved programs that better meet their needs.

CONSISTENT TRAINING FOR RTA TEACHERS. RTA programs provide different amounts of training to their RTA teachers with some interventionists receiving extensive, on-going training. Extensive training is needed for all RTA interventionists.

RTA TEACHER LEADERSHIP. RTA teachers are already acting as informal leaders within their schools. Emphasizing this role by promoting leadership training or certificates for the RTA teachers would formally identify them as leaders in their school.

TRAINING FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS. Since RTA students spend the majority of their day with classroom teachers, these teachers need training in best literacy practices. RTA teachers need to share their literacy knowledge with the classroom teachers in their schools. Additionally, the RTA grant program could provide specialized literacy training for classroom teachers to build capacity within RTA schools.

FOCUS ON EXITING. While the percentage of students exiting RTA increased this year, exiting of RTA students is not always happening. Closer analysis of high performing schools may identify ways to improve the exiting process.

FURTHER EXPLORE DESK AUDIT DATA . The desk audit process allowed RTA programs to describe their RTA implementation in detail. Additional review of this data may provide better understanding of how variation in RTA implementation impacts RTA students.

CONCLUSION

This year, RTA programs served 10,298 students in school districts across the state. Students receive intensive services and data indicates that RTA students in Kindergarten, 2nd grade and 3rd grade are making overall greater gains than predicted average growth and are closing achievement gaps. RTA teachers are highly qualified and teachers and administrators valued their work. There is strong evidence of collaboration and work in literacy teams and the RTA teachers are serving as literacy leaders in their schools.

This year's desk audit process is an important addition to the current evaluation. Evaluators were able to look closely at every RTA school's reported implementation, and get an overall view of the consistencies and variance in statewide RTA implementation.

FUNDING

Table 1 shows the number of schools that participated in the KY RTA program between 2005 and 2015. Although most schools renewed their grants, the number of schools that participated in a given year fluctuated due to schools opting out of the program after participating for one or more years, or schools closing and/or merging.

Table 1.

KY RTA Funding in Millions of Dollars and Number of Schools Participating 2005–2015

Year	Total Funds (Millions)	Average Award	# of schools funded
2005	7.1	*	99
2006	11.1	*	113
2007	20.5	*	212
2008	23.56	\$63,949.00	309
2009	22.56	\$46,835.00	330
2010	22.56	\$60,000.00	328
2011	18.88	\$55,000.00	324
2012	19.69	\$48,500.00	322
2013	15.71	\$49,207.00	321
2014	15.62	\$48,500.00	321
2015	16.99	\$48,500.00	321

FUNDING FOR 2015-2016. This year, 321 RTA school received \$48,500 in funding for the 2015–2016 school year. During the year, two of these schools merged, resulting in a current total of 320 RTA schools. When asked about funding, most administrators indicated that the majority of the funding was used to help cover RTA teacher salaries. The remaining RTA grant money was spent on intervention materials, intervention programs, progress monitoring tools, and professional development.

For many schools, the KY RTA funding did not cover the full cost of the program. Some administrators reported supplementing the grant funds in order to pay for the RTA intervention program or teacher (N=125). Administrators (N=91) reported using an average of \$15,500 in additional funds to support the KY RTA program. Most administrators reported these extra monies came from Title 1 funds, special education funds, general funds, and/or district funds.

One RTA school describes their challenge with finding extra funds.

Currently, RTA funds only cover the salary of the RTA Interventionist. Like most schools across the state, finding extra funds to support the professional learning of the RTA Interventionist is challenging, but we believe critical. Attending trainings and conferences, such as the National Reading Recovery Conference, is very expensive. In addition, there are no extra funds to hire a substitute teacher... Additional funds for professional development and for funding substitute teachers for the RTA Interventionist would significantly enhance the program we provide to students. (Administrator, 2016)

KY RTA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

While there is some flexibility, according to the 2014-2015 RTA Assurance Statement ([more information](#)), the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) requires all schools participating in the KY RTA program to:

- *Provide a highly trained reading intervention teacher*
- *Select from a list of intervention programs which provide short term, intensive instruction in reading skills*
- *Participate in required professional development*
- *Participate in RTA program evaluation*

HIGHLY TRAINED TEACHER. The KY RTA grant requires that schools provide highly trained RTA teachers who have the necessary experience and education to serve the neediest students. Specifically, RTA teachers must be:

...a highly trained/qualified, certified primary teacher with at least three years teaching experience in the primary grades who has, or is working toward, a Master's degree in literacy. If the teacher has, or is working on, a Master's degree in another area, has fifth year certification, or is National Board Certified, he/she will receive additional training in the stated intervention within the first year (RTA Assurance Statement, 2014-2015)

INTERVENTION PROGRAMS. KDE provides some flexibility in selecting which program to use within a school to meet student needs. Prior to the 2014-2015 academic year, RTA schools could select any reading intervention program. In the 2014–15 academic year, KDE provided a list of approved programs and asked schools to select one or more research-based programs to implement. The lists varied by grade level and were approved for K-2 and 2-3. In the current academic year, the KDE website guides schools to choose from the following interventions:

- *Early Intervention in Reading (EIR,) K-3*
- *Reading Recovery, 1*
- *Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM), K-3*
- *Reading Mastery (for English Learners), K-3*

The RTA Request for Applications, 2014-2015, included two additional intervention choices, *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies* and *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*, but no schools chose to implement these interventions and they are not on the current list of RTA interventions on KDE's website.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. The minimum professional development required of all RTA teachers, regardless of their chosen intervention, consists of webinars and trainings offered through KDE. During the 2015-2016 academic year, this professional development addressed the following topics: updated RTA webpages, on-going grant requirements, 3rd-Year optional grant renewal process, and reminders about communicating with parents and collaboration partners ([more information](#)). In addition, KDE provided timely updates to share information on grant compliance, student testing and upcoming events.

PROGRAM EVALUATION. The RTA program also requires that RTA schools participate in the program evaluation process by completing surveys and maintaining the Intervention Tab in Infinite Campus ([more information](#)). This year, schools were also asked to complete an optional 3rd year grant extension desk audit.

As part of the Read to Achieve Act of 2005, the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) was charged by the General Assembly to create a research agenda to evaluate the impact of the Read to Achieve programs on student achievement in reading.

PRIOR EVALUATION FINDINGS

Early RTA evaluations focused primarily on reading achievement for students who participated in RTA¹. These studies indicated the majority of RTA students made more reading progress than expected for their age group and made greater gains than students who did not participate in RTA interventions. More recent RTA evaluations have focused on program implementation as well as student achievement²³⁴.

¹ [Rightmyer, E. \(2009\). *Read to Achieve evaluation: Three year synthesis. A report prepared for the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.*](#)

² [Cantrell, S., Rintamaa, M., Murphy, M., & Cunningham, J. \(2012\). *Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve program 2011-2012. A report prepared for the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.*](#)

The 2012-2013 RTA evaluation provided a thorough look at all aspects of the KY RTA programs, with a particular focus on implementation of reading interventions in case study RTA and non-RTA schools. Evaluators determined that case study RTA schools implemented RTA and their systems of intervention supports at highly variable levels. Based on what was learned from schools that were implementing RTA at high levels, evaluators outlined a list of common characteristics. In 2013-2014, evaluators examined the case study schools more closely to more fully describe the characteristics of high implementing RTA schools. These characteristics are referenced throughout this evaluation (Appendix G).

Results of the most recent RTA evaluation⁵ (2014-2015) indicated that RTA teachers were highly qualified and that classroom teachers and administrators valued the RTA teachers' work. There was strong evidence of collaboration and work in literacy teams with RTA teachers working as an integral part of the overall school system. Literacy teams met frequently and worked together to meet the needs of the students. Students received intensive (almost daily) services and showed gains in reading skills. Students were found to be exiting the RTA programs; however, a large percentage of RTA students still continued in the intervention or were moved to a different intervention.

Last year's student outcome data indicated that RTA students in 2nd grade and 3rd grade were making overall greater gains than the predicted average growth and were closing achievement gaps.

Recommendations from the 2014-2015 evaluation were the following:

- Focus on RTA Grant Program implementation
- Examine alternate observation measures
- Continue training efforts
- Expand the RTA Grant Program at RTA schools
- Continue parental involvement
- Consider the use of a universal literacy assessment at RTA schools
- Explore program factors related to student outcomes

³ [Cantrell, S., Murphy, M., Cunningham, J., & Davis, J. \(2013\). Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve program 2012-2013. A report prepared for the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.](#)

⁴ [Cantrell, S., Murphy, M., Davis, J., Cunningham, J., Sun, L., & Qi, X. \(2014\). Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve program 2013-2014. A report prepared for the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.](#)

⁵ Morgan, Hannah & Hearn, Jessica, Evaluation of Kentucky's Read to Achieve program 2014-2015. A report prepared for the Collaborative center for Literacy Development.

CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT STUDY

EVALUATION PLAN AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This evaluation uses a mixed methods approach to provide a holistic perspective of the project. Data was collected from multiple sources. Achievement data was collected from a group of RTA schools. RTA teachers, classroom teachers, and school administrators completed surveys that captured the nature of the intervention and the collaboration within each school. In addition, RTA teachers and administrators completed a desk audit to gather more information about the fidelity and implementation of RTA programs.

The evaluation was guided by legislative requirements in addition to questions related to KY RTA program implementation. This report is organized around the questions and results.

1) RTA TEACHERS:

- Who are the RTA teachers and what is the relationship among RTA teachers and other shareholders?
- What are classroom teacher and administrators' perceptions of RTA teachers' roles and responsibilities as a part of the school system?

2) RTA STUDENTS:

- Who are they and what is a typical RTA student experience?

3) STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- How does RTA students' performance on assessments compare to national norms?

4) INTERVENTION PROGRAM COMPARISON:

- Which intervention programs are being used?
- What are teachers' level of training and confidence by program?

5) BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF THE RTA PROGRAM:

- What are perceptions of barriers and benefits of RTA programs across RTA teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators?

6) A CLOSER LOOK AT RTA PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION:

- How does implementation vary across RTA schools?
- What characteristics of implementation are consistently seen in top performing RTA schools?

DATA SOURCES

RTA TEACHER SURVEYS. Two surveys, one administered in the fall (November 2015) and one administered in the spring (April 2016), included blocks of questions about intervention use at each grade level, selection and exiting of students, and training for interventions. In addition, open-ended questions were asked about the benefits and challenges of the interventions. Descriptive information about the RTA teacher's education, years' teaching, race, and gender was also collected. All RTA teachers were asked to complete the online surveys and the request yielded a 100 percent response rate for both surveys (N = 320) (Appendices A and B). All responses were included in the data analysis although not all RTA teachers answered all survey questions.

CLASSROOM TEACHER SURVEY. The RTA administrators were asked to forward a survey to classroom teachers of grades Kindergarten through 3rd at their schools. The online survey collected information about grade level taught, years' teaching, level of involvement in the school's RTA program and perceptions about the RTA teacher. Open-ended questions were asked about the benefits and challenges of the interventions. In April 2016, 666 teachers from 108 of 320 schools (33.75%) completed the survey. All responses were included in the data analysis although not all classroom teachers answered all survey questions. The survey results do not represent input from all RTA schools but still provide valuable information for the purpose of this evaluation (Appendix C).

ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY. School-level administrators (e.g. principals) at all RTA schools were asked to complete a survey via an online link. The survey gathered information regarding administrator characteristics, RTA fund allocation, and perceptions about the RTA teacher. In addition, open-ended questions were asked about the benefits and challenges of the RTA program. A total of 144 of 320 administrators (45%) completed the survey. All responses were included in the data analysis although not all administrators answered all survey questions. Administrator survey results do not represent input from all RTA schools but still provide valuable information for the purpose of this evaluation (Appendix D).

STATE SPONSORED ASSESSMENT DATA. Student assessment scores for Kentucky students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade were provided by KDE and the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). The RTA student achievement data included in this evaluation was gathered only from schools that administered the NWEA, *Measures of Academic Progress* (MAP) reading assessment (N=3964). Using these scores allowed for comparison to the 2015 national growth norms provided by NWEA.

Due to the lack of a common reading assessment throughout RTA schools, MAP data was used in this evaluation in order to provide the largest possible sample size (N=160 schools).

However, it is important to note that this year’s sample is much smaller than that from last year due in part to a significant number of schools from at least one district choosing an alternate reading assessment. Additionally, written approval to access MAP data was not obtained from several schools and was not included. Since these student outcome scores only represent growth for a sample of all RTA students, the results cannot be generalized across RTA students.

STATE SPONSORED INTERVENTION DATABASE. As part of the KY RTA grant program, schools were asked to record and track student information in Infinite Campus using the Intervention Tab. RTA teachers recorded information related to student entry/exit dates, length, duration, and the intervention program used. This was only the second year teachers were required to input this data into the Intervention Tab. Being a new system, issues with data entry were noted. Some data appeared unclear and incomplete and some students were entered more than once with different information. Data for RTA students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade was obtained for the 2015–16 school year (N =15,158). Evaluators then analyzed the data to remove students based on the following criteria:

- Criteria 1: Preserved only K-3 grade students
- Criteria 2: Preserved the entries where students attended a district that contained at least one RTA school
- Criteria 3: Removed exact duplicates
- Criteria 4: Removed duplicate students who moved out of a school
- Criteria 5: Removed duplicates that only differed based on school name
- Criteria 6: For duplicates that differed based on date, the most recently updated entry was preserved

Following this series of steps, the final student data set included 10,298 RTA students (Figure 2).

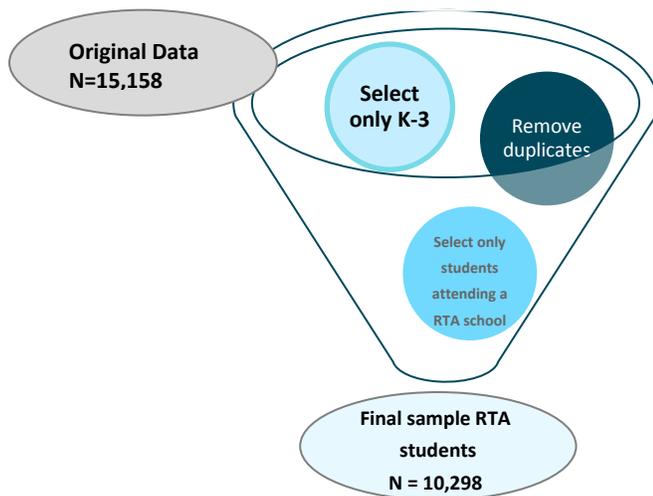


Figure 2: Selecting RTA sample students from original student data.

OPTIONAL 3RD YEAR GRANT EXTENSION DESK AUDIT. During the 2015-2016 academic year, and 2nd year of the grant for RTA schools, KDE administered an optional 3rd year grant extension desk audit to all RTA teachers and principals who wished to renew their grant for the third year (Appendix E). The desk audit was administered via an online survey and asked schools to describe their implementation of the RTA program. Questions were designed to gather information about schools' chosen intervention program(s), RTA teacher schedule, response to KDE sponsored webcasts, universal screener data, grade levels served, numbers served, and student progress. Some questions were open-ended to allow RTA schools flexibility in reporting about their programs and continuation plans.

Once desk audits were submitted to KDE, a school code was assigned to each school and results were shared with CCLD for evaluation purposes. Three evaluators scored desk audits using a rubric which identified key areas of RTA implementation and rated them as *Very Evident*, *Evident*, *Somewhat Evident*, or *Not Evident* (Appendix F). Further data analysis was conducted for schools that rated in the top 10% of all schools (N=32) to identify consistencies in program implementation in high performing schools. Throughout this evaluation, data gathered from top performing RTA schools is referenced to highlight how these schools are implementing their RTA programs.

CHAPTER 3: READ TO ACHIEVE TEACHERS

RTA teachers are a critical component of the KY RTA program. They are tasked with implementing the approved intervention programs, are often the main contact between grant administrators and schools, and have direct, day-to-day interactions with the intended beneficiaries of the grant (the students). Since RTA teachers play such a vital role in the KY RTA Program, it is important to understand who they are, how they work within their schools, and how they are perceived by their colleagues.

READ TO ACHIEVE TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

Information was gathered from all 320 RTA teachers through RTA teacher surveys. Findings indicated that the majority of teachers are female (97.8%) and White/Caucasian (96.0%). The majority of RTA teachers had their Master's degree (50.6%) and 27.5% had a Rank 1 classification. Almost 12% of the RTA teachers were nationally board certified. Overall, the RTA teachers were highly-qualified and possessed advanced degrees (Figure 3).

RTA Teacher Education Level

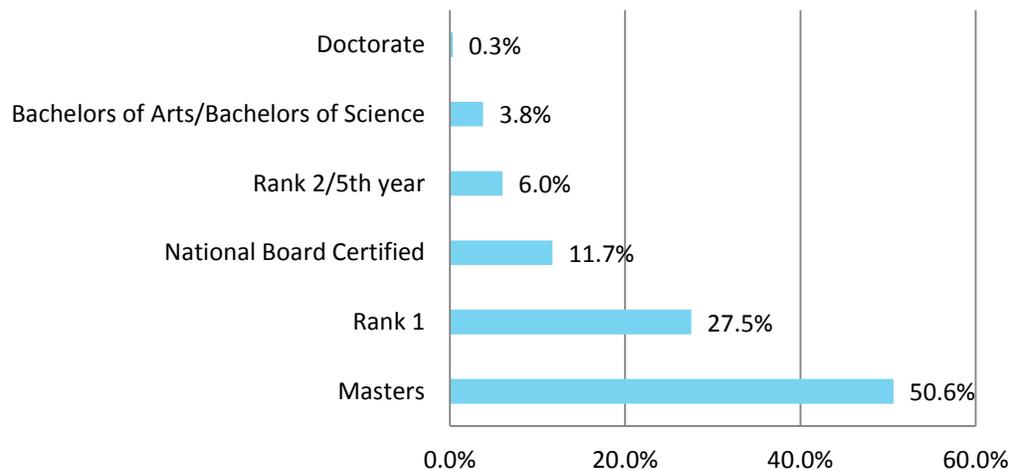


Figure 3. RTA teacher education level (N = 320).

The RTA teachers are experienced educators. On average, RTA teachers had 17.25 years of total teaching experience and five years of RTA teaching experience. Due to a large influx of new RTA schools in 2014-2015, this year was only the second year of RTA participation for many teachers (32.9%). Fifty-one percent of the teachers had significant experience as an RTA teacher (greater than four years). Only 7.3% of teachers were new to the RTA program this year.

RTA TEACHER CASELOAD

The RTA grant program is intended to serve all identified struggling students in the primary grades (K-3). 2015-2016 Intervention Tab data indicated that RTA teachers were serving an average of 33 intervention students within the school. There was wide variation in the number of students served per teacher, with numbers ranging from as low as 8 students to as high as 75 students (desk audit data, 2015-2016).

Desk audit data also indicated the number of grade levels served by RTA interventions during the 2015-2016 school year (Figure 4). Almost half of RTA schools reported serving all grades (Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd) in intervention (49%). A quarter of the schools served three of these grades (26.6%). Almost one-fourth of the schools indicated they served only one or two grades in RTA interventions (7% and 17.5% respectively).

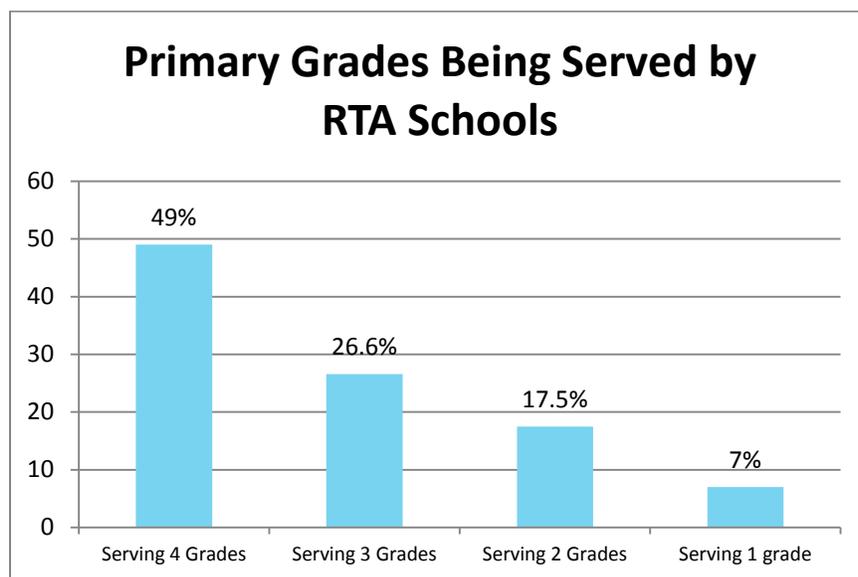


Figure 4. Percentage of grades served in RTA intervention.

Prior evaluations (2012-2013 and 2013-2014) indicated that high implementing RTA teachers spend the majority of their time working directly with students and maintain an active caseload that enables them to serve many students effectively. Compared to this year's average of 33 students served, RTA programs in the top 10% served an average of 37 students with a greater number of these programs (56.25%) serving all primary grades. In 65.63% of these high scoring schools, it was *Very Evident* that RTA teachers had few non-intervention duties, allowing them to spend more time providing direct interventions to students.

RTA PROGRAMS IN THE TOP 10% OF DESK AUDITS WERE SERVING ABOVE AVERAGE NUMBERS (37 STUDENTS)

RTA TEACHER COLLABORATION

COLLABORATION WITH CLASSROOM TEACHERS. While RTA teachers are vital to the KY RTA Grant Program, RTA students spend only a small portion of the day with them receiving the intervention. During the remainder of the school day, RTA students spend time in their traditional classrooms. Therefore, it is important to understand how classroom and RTA teachers interact.

Classroom teachers shared how they collaborate with RTA teachers (classroom teacher survey N=589, Table 2). Teachers ranked their responses on a scale of *Always* (5) to *Never* (1) to indicate their level of interaction with the RTA teacher. Overall, classroom teachers reported strong collaboration with RTA teachers with most collaboration around monitoring (M=4.11) and discussing student progress (M=4.19). The least amount of collaboration occurred in designing professional development activities (M=2.47) and planning classroom instruction together (M = 2.59).

Table 2
How Classroom Teachers and RTA Teachers Collaborate

Collaboration	Mean	SD
Consulted on students' progress	4.19	1.02
Monitored student progress	4.11	1.13
Identified a student for intervention	3.93	1.05
Shared instructional strategies	3.64	1.09
Released a student from intervention	3.40	1.23
Worked together with students in the classroom	2.95	1.40
Selected teaching materials	2.86	1.14
Planned RTA classroom instruction	2.67	1.22
Planned my classroom instruction	2.59	1.14
Developed professional development activities	2.47	1.22

Classroom teachers were asked how often they communicated with the RTA teacher about RTA students (Table 3). Of the 608 responses, 44% reported *Daily* communication. While a minority, some teachers reported their communication with RTA teachers was only *2-3 times per year* (6.1%) or *Never* (5.3%).

Table 3

Frequency of RTA Teacher and Classroom Teacher Communication

Communication	N	%
Daily	269	44.2%
Once a Week	196	32.2%
Once a Month	74	12.2%
2-3 Times a Year	37	6.1%
Never	32	5.3%

Collaboration between classroom and RTA teachers appeared to be impacting classroom practice. Of 606 responses, 85% of classroom teachers indicated they adjusted their classroom instruction as a result of this collaboration. After receiving feedback from the RTA teacher, classroom teachers reported they made adjustments to their grouping, reading materials, method of providing instruction, and instructional content and skills (Table 4).

Table 4

How Teachers Adjusted Classroom Instruction Based on RTA Teacher Feedback

	N= 606
Adjusted grouping	417 (68.81%)
Adjusted reading materials	371 (61.22%)
Adjusted method of providing instruction	361 (59.57%)
Adjusted instructional content/skills	339 (55.94%)

Previous RTA evaluations found that high implementing RTA teachers have strong collaborative relationships with classroom teachers, creating powerful literacy resources (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). This year, desk audit evaluators assessed the strength of collaboration between RTA teachers and classroom teachers in top performing RTA schools. Overwhelmingly, 93% of these high scoring schools reported *Very Evident* collaboration between RTA teachers and other shareholders.

93% OF HIGH SCORING DESK AUDIT SCHOOLS REPORTED *VERY EVIDENT* COLLABORATION BETWEEN RTA TEACHERS AND OTHER SHAREHOLDERS.

One high scoring school describes the collaboration between shareholders.

A strength at (our school) is the collaboration between the classroom teachers, Interventionist, Guidance Counselor and the Principal. This team... meets monthly to discuss student progress. Classroom teachers share data on formative and summative assessments and progress shown in the classroom. Interventionists share current text levels in Reading Recovery and CIM. Writing samples are also shared. Each RTA student is discussed. The team collaboratively determines if

changes need to be made in the child's intervention program. The process has been a valued program at our school and will continue. (Desk Audit, 2016)

Another top performing school describes how the RTA program has improved their collaboration.

In 2015-2016, meetings to discuss intervention student progress have been much more data driven and consistent with the grant. Although the grant isn't a classroom grant, student growth depends heavily upon the types of experiences students have during guided reading. The inclusion of running records and the use of some of the same rubrics to measure comprehension and fluency...has made collaboration much stronger. In reality, the collaborative piece of the grant is what was missing from (our school) before RTA. (Desk Audit, 2016)

FORMAL COLLABORATIVE TEAMS. RTA teacher surveys (N=312) indicated that 91.03% of RTA schools have an identified literacy or RTA team. Team members included principals (89% of the time), one or more primary classroom teachers (76% of the time) and parents (11% of the time). Teams usually met as needed (37%) or monthly (27%) but there appeared to be wide variability in how often literacy teams were meeting to discuss RTA students (Figure 5).

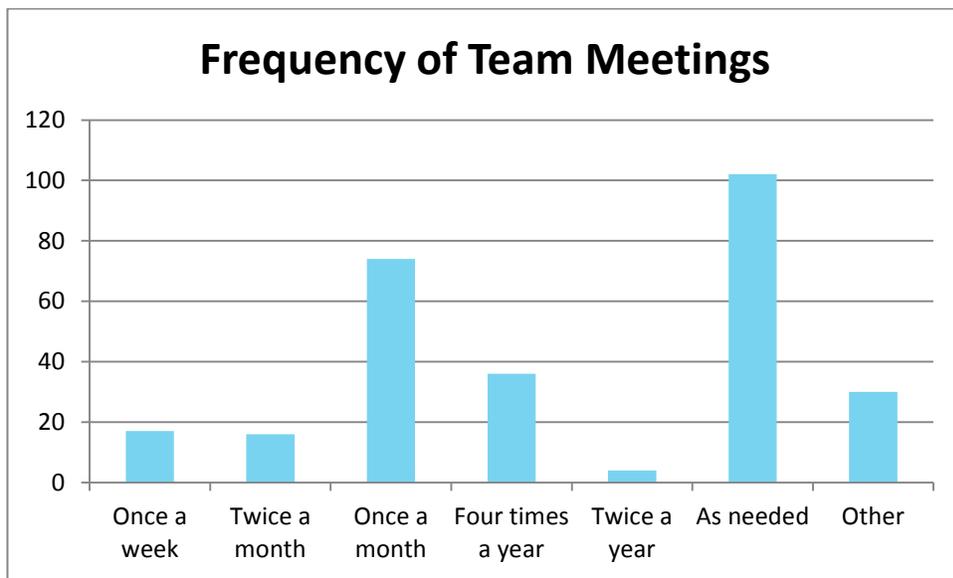


Figure 5. Frequency of literacy team meetings by number of schools (N=278).

Prior RTA evaluations indicated that high implementing RTA schools contain data-driven decision-making teams with the RTA teachers serving as team leaders (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). These strong collaborative literacy teams were found to be essential components to establishing successful systems of interventions. In looking at desk audit data for the top 10% of RTA schools

(N=32) it appeared that in 90% of these schools it was *Very Evident* that the school had a literacy decision-making team, however, only four RTA teachers were found to be serving as team leaders.

IN 90% OF TOP PERFORMING SCHOOLS IT IS VERY EVIDENT THAT THE SCHOOL HAS A LITERACY DECISION-MAKING TEAM

One high performing school describes their team.

We have an RTA team who makes collaborative decisions, including student selection and exiting the program. Data is always used to support our decisions to move students as fluidly as we can. (Desk Audit, 2016)

Some RTA teachers in high implementing schools are part of additional teams.

...the RTA Teacher engages in Team RTA Meetings at the Central Office level in the District. During these times, RTA Teachers from throughout the school district collaborate to discuss implementation of the grant-approved intervention program and contribute to one another's professional learning. (Desk Audit, 2016)

COLLABORATION WITH PARENTS. While not a specific requirement of the KY RTA grant program, prior evaluations have found that high implementing RTA schools strengthen their program by involving parents in the RTA process (2012-2013 and 2013-2014). Analysis of desk audit data indicates that parental outreach and involvement was *Very Evident* in almost all (90%) of the high performing schools. One high implementing school saw parent involvement and support “critical to a child’s continued improvement at school”. Another reported that “enlightening parents on students’ progress and strategies to practice at home help reinforce the importance of reading and the RTA program”.

ANALYSIS OF DESK AUDIT DATA INDICATES THAT PARENTAL OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT IS *VERY EVIDENT* IN ALMOST ALL (90%) OF THE TOP SCORING SCHOOLS.

One high performing school described their parental outreach.

(The RTA teacher) communicates with parents on the phone and in writing, via a daily reading log with a comments section. She invites parents to observe a Reading Recovery lesson with their child. She sends surveys to administrators, teachers and parents to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to get feedback and input on the impact of the program. She writes and encourages parents to write letters to legislators to advocate for continued funding for our most at-risk students. (Desk Audit, 2016)

Many top performing RTA schools reported holding family literacy nights.

(Our school) has two Family Literacy Nights per year as part of our collaboration with parents. During Family Literacy Nights, students and parents are provided with free books, bookmarks, and a list of literacy strategies to help students with reading at home. .. During that night, we have a variety of literacy activities set up for parents and students to participate in together. (Desk Audit, 2016)

RTA TEACHER LITERACY LEADERSHIP

Previous RTA evaluation findings (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014) indicate that RTA teachers serve as informal literacy leaders in their schools. Information was gathered about shareholders' perceptions of RTA teachers' literacy leadership. On surveys, school administrators and classroom teachers were asked how much they agreed, *Strongly Agree* (5) to *Strongly Disagree* (1), that RTA teachers engaged in specific leadership behaviors. Responses of administrators (N = 140) and teachers (N= 666) were very similar and indicated an overall positive perception of RTA teacher leadership. Both administrators and classroom teachers rated RTA teachers' leadership high in the area of attending decision-making meetings and being an integral part of the literacy decision-making process. Administrators also viewed RTA teachers as strong collaborators while classroom teachers identified the strong contribution RTA teachers made to the progress monitoring of students. The administrators' average responses were consistently higher than classroom teachers' average responses.

Table 5.

Average Classroom Teachers and Administrators' Perceptions of RTA Teachers

	Classroom	Admin.	Difference
	Teacher		
	Mean	Mean	Diff.
Attends decision-making literacy intervention meetings	4.53	4.85	0.32
Leads decision making literacy intervention meetings	4.18	4.50	0.32
Provides training for others in their school and/or district	3.93	4.40	0.47
Lessons are observed by TEACHERS to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others	3.51	4.21	0.70
Lessons are observed by PARENTS to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others	3.05	3.40	0.35
Lessons are observed by ADMINISTRATORS to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others	4.10	4.80	0.70
Collaborates with classroom teachers (frequent and regular meetings/check-ins about intervention students)	4.49	4.87	0.38
Coordinates and/or performs progress monitoring duties for their intervention students as well as other RtI students at their school	4.58	4.90	0.32
Takes a leadership role in family literacy nights	4.31	4.60	0.29
Serves as a literacy resource to others (teachers/parents ask questions, seek advice, get new strategies, etc.)	4.49	4.79	0.30
Collaborates with parents (initiates regular contact, sends home books./materials, shares progress monitoring data, invites them in for observations/conferences)	4.29	4.73	0.44
Is an integral part of the RtI decision-making process	4.52	4.84	0.32
Is viewed as a literacy leader by others in the school	4.48	4.82	0.34
Is active in a larger literacy community (district, region, state)	4.01	4.39	0.38
OVERALL AVERAGE	4.17	4.57	0.40

High implementing RTA teachers have been found to assume many literacy roles in their schools and be an integral part of the intervention decision-making process, taking on literacy leadership duties in their schools and districts (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). This year, desk audit evaluators also looked at whether RTA teachers held leadership responsibilities (i.e. leading teams, leading parent programs) within their school. In high performing schools, literacy leadership by the RTA teacher appeared *Very Evident* in 68%.

One top performing school describes the RTA teacher leadership.

The RTA teacher is a literacy leader in our school. She works closely with classroom teachers to assist them with designing literacy instruction for their students. The RTA teacher is the chairperson of our Writing/Literacy Committee... As chairperson, she keeps the faculty updated about the school's progress in meeting program review goals. She facilitates committee meetings as well as working with the committee to keep literacy instruction at (our school) in the spotlight. She has chaired our school's family literacy night for several years. This event is very successful...This year we had over 125 students to participate in literacy activities. (Desk Audit, 2016)

Prior RTA evaluations have indicated that high implementing RTA teachers increase their impact by sharing knowledge with other teachers within their schools and districts (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). Review of desk audit data assessed whether RTA teachers shared their knowledge with others within the school or broader community. Of the high scoring schools, 65.6% of RTA teachers showed *Very Evident* sharing of knowledge.

This sharing is described below.

Within the professional community, the RTA teacher serves as a resource for classroom teachers by providing training, literacy strategies, and materials to use within the classroom. This shared knowledge benefits not only RTA students, but all primary students. This shared knowledge provides more connection and fluidity between the RTA environment and the classroom, resulting in student growth. Classroom teachers can use the strategies and resources to promote student growth and effectively provide interventions as needed in their own classroom. (Desk Audit, 2016)

One RTA teacher survey question asked “What could you implement to help impact student learning at your school?”. Of the open-ended responses, 151 of 228 RTA teachers (53.55%) specifically indicated that they would like to share their literacy knowledge with their classroom teachers. RTA teachers indicated they would like to have all teachers “on the same page”, to share a “common language” and to support

classroom literacy instruction by leading PLC meetings, book studies, and summer professional learning opportunities.

CHAPTER 4: READ TO ACHIEVE STUDENTS

Students receiving RTA interventions may have greatly different experiences. This chapter focuses on RTA students' characteristics, selection, instruction, and program exit to provide a comprehensive look at the RTA program experience. The final section of the chapter focuses on RTA student achievement outcomes.

RTA STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The state-sponsored Intervention Tab data indicated that RTA programs statewide served 10,298 students in the 2015-2016 academic year. Most of the students were served in the 1st grade and the fewest students were served in 3rd grade (Table 6).

Table 6.

RTA Students by Grade Level (N=10,298)

Grade	Percent
K	20%
1	43.6%
2	22%
3	14.3%

In addition to the data received from the Intervention Tab, KDE provided demographic information for RTA students as of June 2016. According to this data, 54.8% of RTA students were male and 45.1% of students were female (Table 7). RTA students were predominately Caucasian while about 10% of students were African American. The percentages of students' gender and race are very similar to last years' percentages.

Table 7.

Demographic Categories of RTA Students (N= 11,894).

Category	Number (%)
Gender	
Female	5372 (45.1%)
Male	6522 (54.8%)
Race/Ethnicity	
White/Caucasian	9164 (77%)
Black/African American	1183 (9.9%)
Asian	60 (0.5%)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	17 (0.1%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	14 (0.1%)
Other Ethnicity (Multiple Categories Selected)	1456 (12.2%)

RTA PROGRAM ENTRY

The KY RTA Grant Assurance Statement states that, “intervention services will be provided to struggling primary program readers within the school based upon ongoing assessment of their needs” and requires a diagnostic assessment to be administered. Survey data indicated that the selection of RTA of student participation was based on input from RTA teachers 97% of the time, followed by the classroom teachers (89%), and the principal (67%). Data coordinators (47%) and parents (18%) were also listed as sometimes participating in selection decisions.

The most commonly used methods for selecting RTA students were performance on a diagnostic screener (96.6%) and referral from classroom teachers (85.4%)(see Figure 6).

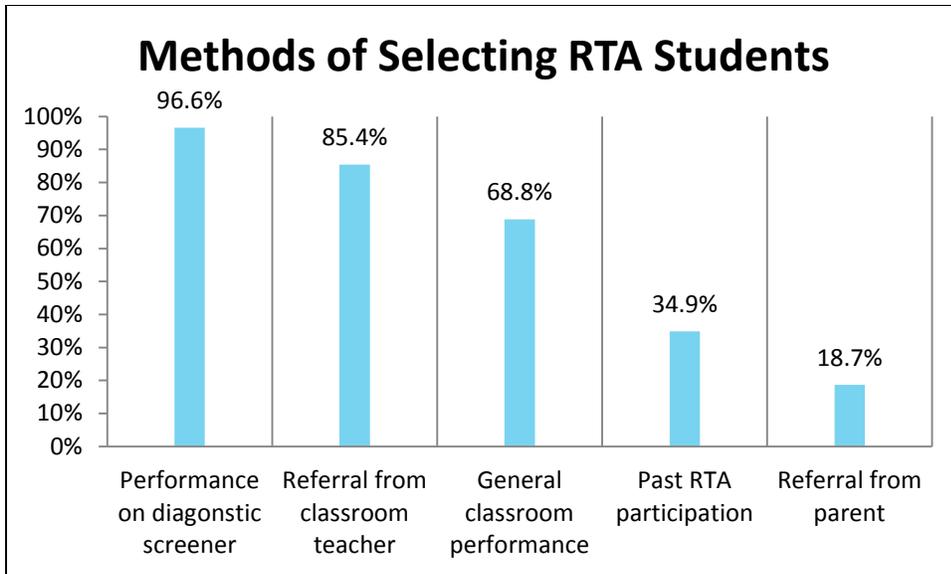


Figure 6. KY RTA program entrance selection methods (N = 320) by percentage.

RTA schools reported using a variety of diagnostic screeners (N= 23: RTA surveys, N= 28: desk audits). About one-third (32.4 %) of RTA teachers reported using multiple assessments. In total, 31 screeners were listed on either RTA teacher surveys or desk audits (Appendix H).

The overall goal of RTA is to serve all primary grade struggling readers within the schools in which the grant is provided. However, 72% of RTA teachers reported they were not able to serve all struggling readers due to varying constraints of the programs and limitations of school resources. A reported average of 23 students in each of these schools qualified for RTA intervention services but did not receive them.

An issue that emerged when analyzing student selection data was some RTA students that appeared to begin the school year with reading scores at or near the mean for their grade level. It is not clear if this reading score was used to select them into interventions or if a subsequent lower score qualified them for RTA selection. Clarification of diagnostic screener data is needed in order to more fully understand how schools are selecting RTA students.

INTERVENTION EXPERIENCE

The students' experience with RTA interventions began very early in the school year. Survey data (N= 314) indicates that by three weeks into the school year, 90% of the RTA teachers were working with their students. Table 8 provides more information about RTA students' intervention experience. This data, obtained from the Intervention Tab, indicates that the majority of RTA

90% OF RTA TEACHERS WERE WORKING WITH THEIR STUDENTS BY THREE WEEKS INTO THE SCHOOL YEAR

students received interventions daily (79.4%) or 3-4 days a week (16.7%). In addition, most students (81%) received their instruction in thirty-minute blocks of time and 8% of students received less than 30 minute instructional blocks.

Table 8
Frequency and Duration of RTA Intervention

		Duration of Instructional Block						Total	%
		< 30 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes	60 minutes	>60 minutes			
Frequency of Intervention	No information provided	51	31	141	10	0	0	233	2.3%
	Daily	411	663	6795	254	51	4	8178	79.4%
	2 days/week	4	41	80	20	0	1	146	1.4%
	3-4 days/week	140	94	1337	124	6	16	1717	16.7%
	Weekly	2	0	12	6	2	0	22	.2%
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	.0
Total		608	829	8367	414	59	21	10298	100%

Serving small numbers of student in each intervention group allows students more intensive, individualized instruction. Survey data indicates that the average group size for all RTA interventions was less than 5 students (Table 9).

Table 9
Average Group Size by Intervention

Intervention	Average Group Size
Reading Recovery	1.14
Comprehensive Intervention Model	3.89
Early Intervention in Reading	4.24
Reading Mastery	4.71
Other Interventions	4.13

Throughout the intervention experience, ongoing assessments are used to target appropriate instruction. Prior evaluations have noted that in high implementing RTA schools, interventions are flexible and students move between interventions frequently as needed based on assessment data (2012-2013 and 2013-2014). This year, desk audit evaluators noted whether the RTA interventions appeared flexible with students moving within and between interventions (i.e. moving from a *Guided Reading Plus* CIM group to an *Assisted Writing* CIM group) or exiting fluidly back into regular classroom instruction. In the top 10% of desk audits, flexibility of the intervention experience appeared to be *Very Evident* in 56.25% of these schools.

PROGRAM EXIT

One of the main goals of reading interventions through RTA is to exit students successfully from the program so students may return to classroom reading instruction or to a less intensive intervention. Based on 2015-2016 student status data from 10,298 student records in the Intervention Tab (Figure 7), 38.8% of students successfully exited their RTA intervention a number up from 34% exiting in the 2014-2015 school year. Similar to last year’s exiting data, approximately one-fourth (27.5%) of students continued in the RTA intervention and 16.6% of students were exited to another intervention to better meet their needs.

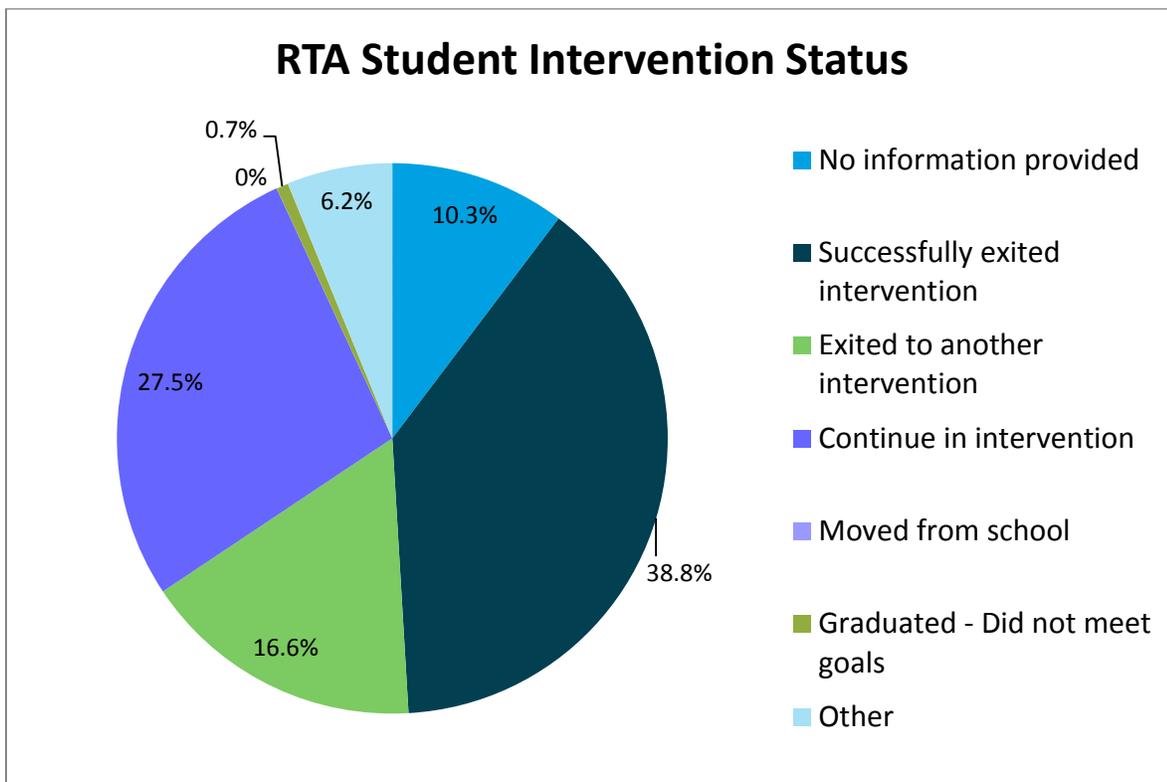


Figure 7. RTA student intervention status percentages (N= 10,298).

Many RTA students are exiting interventions and returning to the literacy supports available in regular classroom instruction. Still, as noted in last year's evaluation, exiting students from RTA interventions is not always happening. RTA teachers were asked, on surveys, why some RTA students don't exit interventions successfully. Some challenges to exiting are reflected below.

The students who do not successfully exit RTA intervention do not make enough growth to achieve grade level reading expectations. They all make great growth and close the gap but not enough growth is made due to how far they were behind their classroom peers when intervention services began.

Students in the past may have had too many absences, transferred from other schools without accurate progress monitoring, or have had home situation that made it very difficult for them to learn.

Always when a student doesn't successfully exit RTA intervention, you have to look at yourself as a teacher and do some reflection because there are areas of improvement, in my analysis of running records and teacher decisions, to stay on the cutting edge of the student's learning.

For those students who do exit RTA intervention successfully, the skills they learn can carry over to the regular classroom.

Many students who have had these interventions have made great progress and been able to exit interventions. These students have become more confident in their self-help strategies and are better equipped as strategic readers and writers when they return to the classroom. Teachers have commented about how they can always tell the students who have been in RR or CIM intervention because they are more willing to use multiple strategies to help themselves when difficulties arise in their reading and writing (RTA desk audit, 2016)

Previous RTA evaluations have indicated that high implementing RTA schools have an organized and clearly defined exiting process and make decisions as a team (2012-2013 and 2013-2014). This helps them serve more students by moving them fluidly between the interventions they need. In this year's desk audit high performing schools appeared to be exiting students more frequently from RTA interventions. The desk audit data revealed that in the top 10% of schools, 59.38% were found to be *Very Evident* in exiting students from RTA interventions.

IN HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS, STUDENTS' APPEARED TO BE EXITING MORE FREQUENTLY FROM RTA INTERVENTIONS. THE DESK AUDIT DATA REVEALED THAT IN THE TOP 10% OF SCHOOLS, 59.38% WERE FOUND TO BE *VERY EVIDENT* IN EXITING STUDENTS FROM RTA INTERVENTIONS.

RTA STUDENT OUTCOMES

For the 2015-2016 academic year, assessing RTA program effects on RTA students proficiency levels on the statewide, K-PREP literacy test was unfeasible due to lack of data availability.⁶ Additionally, RTA intervention students in grades K-2nd are not administered the K-PREP assessment. As an alternative, the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is generally considered a reliable predictor of K-PREP scores; as a proxy, growth on MAP scores from fall to spring was examined.⁷ Only RTA students with MAP assessment data were used in this analysis (N=3964).

Comparing growth on the MAP in aggregate is difficult because, according to the NWEA (⁸Dahlin, 2014) a “year’s” worth of growth (as defined by mean normative values) varies across students of differing initial achievement and ages. Thus, a student’s starting point will determine his or her expected growth. NWEA suggests that it is helpful to compare norms for the same grade level of students in public schools across the U.S.

Analysis of MAP data for RTA students indicated that over the 2015-2016 academic year, RTA Kindergarten students grew an average of 18.47 points (National norm mean growth is 17.1 points). RTA students in the 1st grade grew an average of 16.3 points (National norm mean growth is 16.8 points). Students in the 2nd grade grew an average of 17.71 points (National norm mean growth is 14 points). Students in the 3rd grade grew an average of 14.16 points (National norm mean growth is 10.3 points) (Table 10).

Table 10

RTA Student MAP Growth and Nationally Normed Mean MAP Growth (N=3964)

	RTA Students with MAP Scores		National Norms
	N	Mean Growth (SD)	Mean Growth (SD)
K	485	18.47 (9.95)	17.1 (8.11)
1st	1,575	16.3 (9.21)	16.8 (8.09)
2nd	911	17.71 (10.35)	14.0 (8.20)
3rd	649	14.16 (10.32)	10.3 (7.59)

⁶ K-PREP data becomes available in the fall of the following school year; therefore data for the 2015–16 academic year was not available for analysis for the present evaluation.

⁷ Northwest Evaluation Association. (2012). A study of the alignment of the NWEA RIT Scale with Kentucky’s Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP). (n.p.): Author.

⁸ Dahlin, See more at: <https://www.nwea.org/blog/2014/measure-years-growth-begin-student/#sthash.fwWXllpQ.dpuf>

Results indicated that in grades Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 3rd grade, the mean growth scores for RTA students were significantly higher than the average predicted growth. For 1st grade, the RTA student mean growth score was less than the average predicted growth, but this difference was not statistically significant. The data indicated that RTA students in grades Kindergarten, 2nd grade and 3rd grade were making overall greater gains than the national norm group and were closing achievement gaps.

STUDENT OUTCOME DATA INDICATES THAT RTA STUDENTS IN GRADES KINDERGARTEN, 2ND GRADE AND 3RD GRADE WERE MAKING OVERALL GREATER GAINS THAN THE NATIONAL NORM GROUP AND WERE CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS.

Compared to last year's evaluation, which showed significant growth for RTA students in 2nd and 3rd grades, this year Kindergarten students also showed significant growth. Again, it is important to note that these student outcome scores only represent growth for a sample (those with MAP data) of all RTA students.

CHAPTER 5: RTA INTERVENTION PROGRAM COMPARISON

RTA PROGRAM USE

The current evaluation also compared information about each RTA grant-approved intervention program (surveys and desk audit). Schools were asked to specify which primary intervention program (s) they were using. Across grades K-3, desk audit data indicate that 77% of RTA programs were using the RR intervention, followed by CIM (72%), EIR (23%), and Reading Mastery (0.9%)(Table11).

Table 11

Program Use Overall (N = 320 schools)

Intervention Program	# of Schools Using Intervention	% of Schools Using Intervention
Reading Recovery	248	77%
CIM	232	72%
EIR	74	23%
Reading Mastery	3	0.9%
Other (Non-grant Approved)	48	14.9%

When examined by grade level, RTA teacher survey data indicates that 225 RTA schools were serving Kindergarten (70%), 310 schools were serving 1st grade (97%), 273 schools were serving 2nd grade (85%) and 205 schools were serving 3rd grade (64 %) with RTA funded interventions (Table 12). CIM was the most used intervention in Kindergarten, 2nd grade and 3rd grade. Reading Recovery was the most used intervention in 1st grade.

Table 12

Frequency of Interventions by Grade Level

Program Used at Grade Level	N	% of responses	Program Used at Grade Level	N	% of responses
Kindergarten			2nd Grade		
K-Reading Recovery	2	0.2%	2nd-Reading Recovery	2	0.2%
K-CIM	149	12.10%	2nd-CIM	187	15.10%
K-EIR	60	4.90%	2nd-EIR	67	5.40%
K-Reading Mastery	2	0.2%	2nd-Reading Mastery	4	0.3%
K-Other	12	1.00%	2nd-Other	15	1.20%
K-Intervention they used was not indicated	6	0.5%	2nd-Intervention they used was not indicated	5	0.4%
Number of schools serving Kindergarten	225		Number of schools serving 2 nd grade	273	
1st Grade			3rd Grade		
1st-Reading Recovery	244	19.70%	3rd-Reading Recovery	1	0.1%
1st-CIM	184	14.90%	3rd-CIM	131	10.60%
1st-EIR	68	5.50%	3rd-EIR	57	4.60%
1st-Reading Mastery	5	0.4%	3rd-Reading Mastery	4	0.3%
1st-Other	12	1.00%	3rd-Other	14	1.10%
1st-Intervention they used was not indicated	1	0.1%	3rd-Intervention they used was not indicated	4	0.3%
Number of schools serving 1 st grade	310		Number of schools serving 3 rd grade	205	

Nearly 15% of RTA schools reported using a non-grant approved program with at least some students (Table 11). Below is a list of the various non-grant approved interventions reported on surveys and desk audits.

Non-Grant Approved Interventions Used by RTA Teachers

- Leveled Literacy Intervention
- Early Literacy Groups
- Early Success
- Earobics
- Great Leaps
- Linda Mood Bell Interventions
- Saxon Phonics
- Small Guided Reading Groups
- Soar to Success
- Jan Richardson, Guided Reading
- Guided reading interventions taught and designed by the RTA teacher
- Teacher created instruction
- Imagine It Kit
- Soar to Success
- 95% Group
- Collaboration with classroom teacher

RTA TEACHER EXPERIENCE, TRAINING AND CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Surveys asked RTA teachers to report on hours of training, years teaching and level of confidence in the interventions they used (Table 13).

Table 13

RTA Teachers and Program Comparisons

Intervention Program Used	Average Hours of Training Since July 1, 2015	Average Years Teaching Program	Average Confidence in Teaching Program
Reading Recovery	20.59	5.89	3.79
CIM	14.98	3.22	3.19
EIR	4.50	2.97	3.57
Reading Mastery	0.57	4.43	3.43
Other (Non-grant approved) Interventions	4.25	4.75	3.7

Training for RTA reading interventions included DVDs, face-to-face meetings, and webinars. On average, Reading Recovery teachers reported the most training (20.59 hours across the year) and teaching experience (5.89 years). RTA teachers using the CIM intervention had an average of 14.98 hours of training and 3.22 years of experience. EIR interventionists received a relatively small amount of training, an average of 4.5 hours across the year. The least amount of training was received by Reading Mastery interventionists (.57 hours of training across the year) although they did report a relatively high number of years teaching the program (4.43 years). Overall, RTA teachers had used EIR and CIM for the fewest years (2.97 years and 3.22 years respectively).

RTA teachers were asked to indicate on a scale of *Very Confident* (4) to *Not Confident at All* (1) their level of confidence in teaching their intervention programs. Across the board, RTA teachers reported relatively high levels of confidence in teaching interventions with average confidence scores ranging from 3.19 to 3.79 (Table 13). The lowest average confidence score was reported by CIM interventionists. However, RTA teachers may not participate in CIM training until they finish their Reading Recovery training year so some teachers implement a CIM intervention framework prior to training. This may have impacted their level of confidence in teaching CIM groups.

In previous evaluations high implementing RTA teachers were found to be using evidence-based interventions, were well prepared to teach these interventions and participated in

continued professional learning (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). In analysis of this year’s desk audit data, 71.86% of top scoring schools used the intervention that provided the most training throughout the school year (RR). In addition 90.63% of RTA teachers in high performing schools reported using only evidence-based, grant-approved interventions.

DESK AUDIT DATA REVEALED THAT 90.63% OF TOP PERFORMING SCHOOLS USED ONLY RTA GRANT-APPROVED INTERVENTIONS

As noted, about 15% of RTA programs reported using other, non-grant approved interventions with students. It appeared that the RTA teachers were experienced in teaching these other interventions (4.75 year average) and continued to receive training in these non-grant approved interventions (4.25 hours since July 1, 2015, Table 13). Their confidence in teaching these interventions was, on average, stronger than their confidence in teaching most of the grant-approved interventions (3.7 of 4.0). Last year’s evaluation also identified non-grant approved program use and suggested that a “lack of training, or comfort with another program previously used, (was) one possible reason teachers were straying from the grant-approved programs” (2015-2016). This year’s findings suggest that some RTA teachers, even those in top performing schools (9.3%), are still more comfortable with the interventions they have used in the past and are choosing to implement these instead of the grant-approved interventions.

CHAPTER 6: A CLOSER LOOK AT IMPLEMENTATION OF RTA

To take a closer look at the implementation of the KY RTA grant program, KDE administered an optional 3rd year grant extension desk audit to all RTA schools who wished to renew their grant for the third year. The desk audit provided an opportunity for schools to reacquaint themselves with their grant requirements, take note of their progress and make decisions about next steps. All RTA schools (N=320) completed the desk audit process via an online survey and KDE shared the data with CCLD evaluators. The evaluators used a scoring rubric to note the presence of data supporting the following key areas of RTA implementation: (1) strength of implementation/compliance, (2) fidelity to intervention program(s), (3) awareness of RTA and its components, (4) thoughtful reflection and planning during desk audit process and (5) reported student growth of RTA students (Appendix F). Schools received a score of *Very Evident* (=3), *Evident* (=2), *Somewhat Evident* (=1) or *Not Evident* (=0) in each of the five areas). Combining these five area scores resulted in an overall score (15 to 0).

OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluators provided KDE with the overall scores for all RTA desk audits, with programs placed in one of three broad categories. In general, category 1 (score of 15-10) and category 2 (score of 9-4) included programs that provided details of their RTA implementation and compliance and demonstrated sufficient program fidelity. Of particular interest to KDE was the third category of RTA desk audits. These programs received a score of three or lower and were flagged for further review by KDE. The desk audits that received low scores often shared similar issues. Sometimes schools provided a general lack of information that made assessment of implementation difficult. Additionally, some desk audits provided information that was identical to other desk audits and authentic reporting and reflection was not apparent. In some schools, the loss of the RTA teacher during the school year hampered schools in providing enough information to warrant a higher score. At times, the use of non-grant approved interventions and a lack of commitment to grant-approved interventions resulted in a lower overall score.

KDE provided schools in this lower scoring category an opportunity to resubmit their desk audit. Desk audit resubmissions were shared with evaluators (N=26) and 85% of these resubmissions received a higher overall score moving them out of the lowest scoring category (Figure 8).

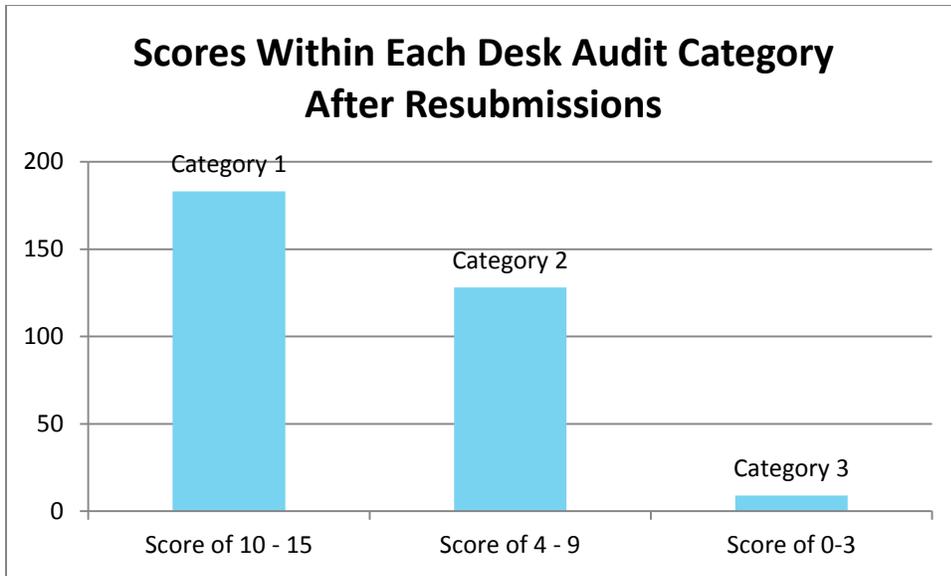


Figure 8. Number of schools scoring within each desk audit category.

Figure 9 shows the frequency of each overall score and reflects their distribution with the majority of scores clustered around the mean ($M=7.5$). In some cases, normal distributions (clustered around the mean) are not expected. Given the additional training, guidelines and funding provided by the RTA grant program, rather than a normal distribution, the RTA evaluators initially expected scores clustered on the higher end of the distribution with less variation of overall scores. However, since desk audit scores were based on self-reported data, many variables (i.e. effort and knowledge of person(s) completing desk audit) may have influenced the overall scores.

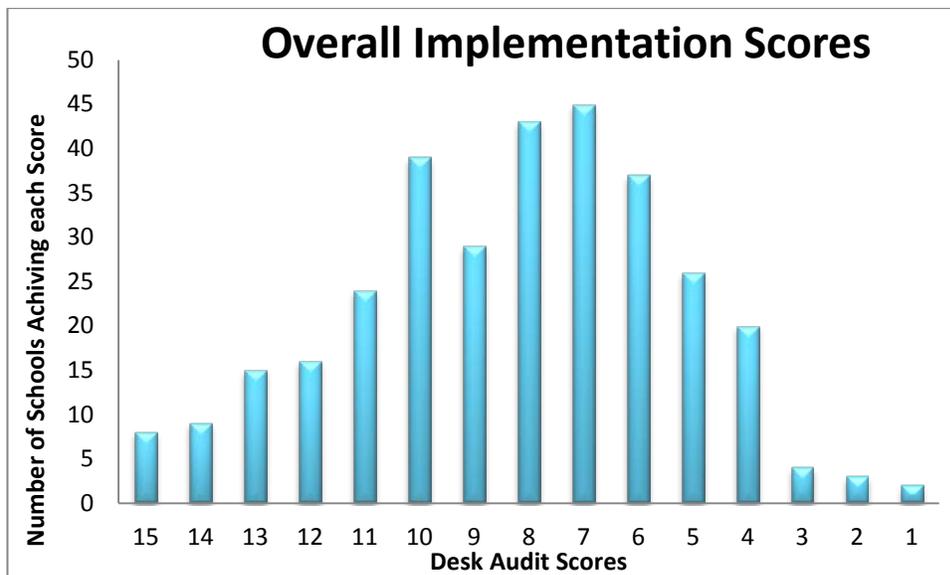


Figure 9. Desk audit overall implementation score frequency.

KEY AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The overall score for each school was obtained by adding the rubric scores for the five key areas of implementation. Data for all desk audits in these five key areas is discussed to highlight the consistency and variability of implementation across RTA schools. In addition, data from the top 10% of desk audits is highlighted to look at the consistency of implementation in these high performing schools. To do this, evaluators assessed how often these high scoring schools appeared *Very Evident* in their implementation of key areas. Figure 10 illustrates the variability of scores in the five areas for the 320 desk audits.

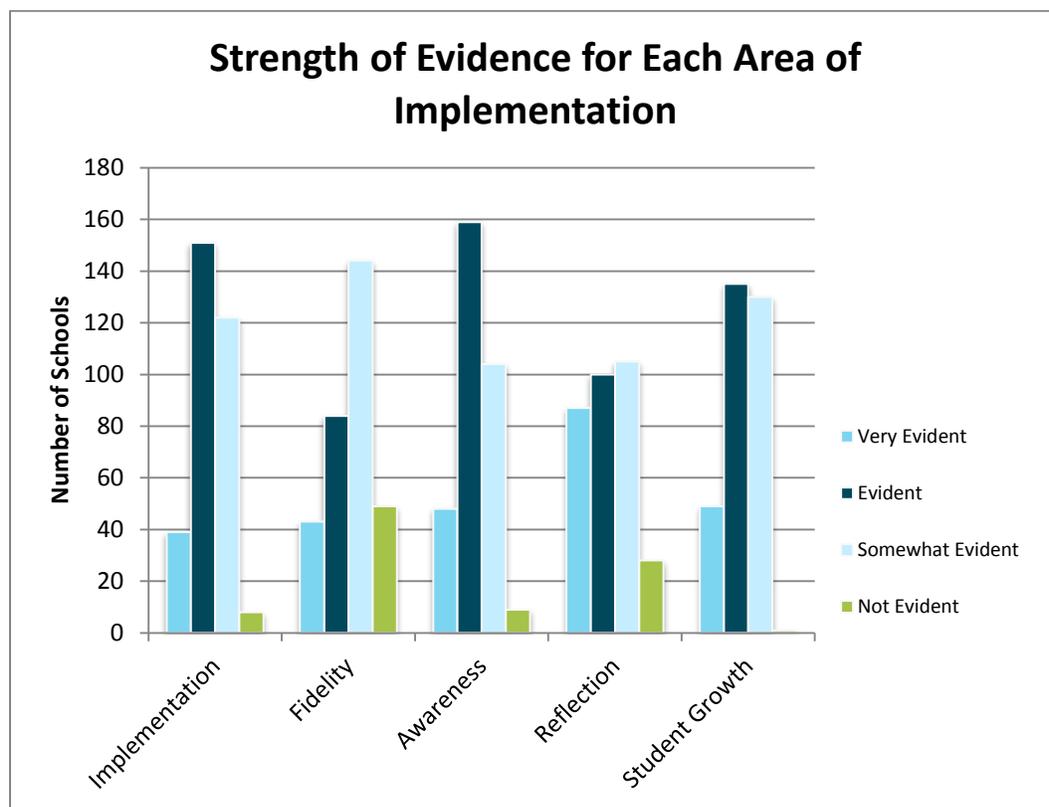


Figure 10. Frequency of scores in each key area.

STRENGTH OF IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE. Evaluators assessed the strength of each RTA program’s implementation and compliance according to individual and statewide grant requirements. While reviewing desk audits, evaluators noted progress monitoring of RTA students, collaboration with shareholders, presence of literacy teams, parental outreach, exiting of students, literacy leadership of the RTA teachers and ongoing professional learning. Almost half of the schools scored *Evident* in this area. Thirty-eight percent scored *Somewhat Evident* with a small percentage scoring *Very Evident* (12%) or *Not Evident* (3%) (Figure 11). The predominance of midrange score in this area indicates average RTA program implementation and compliance.

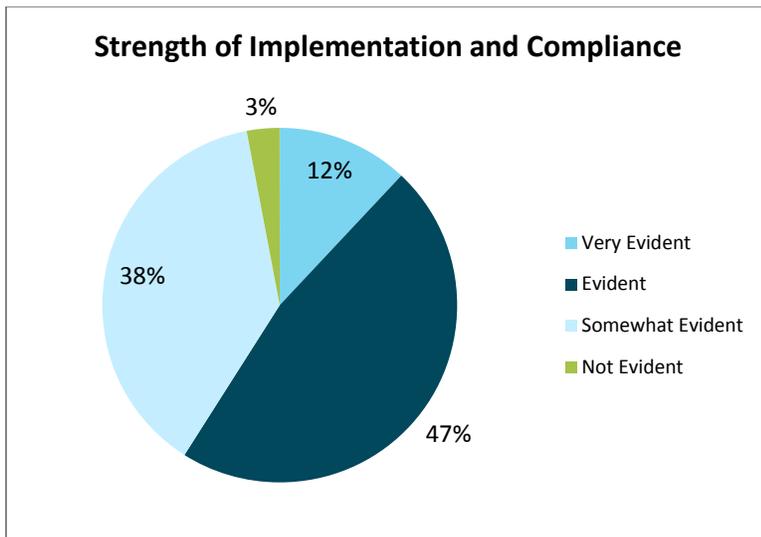


Figure 11. Percentage of RTA schools receiving each score.

In comparison, the top 10% of desk audit schools showed more evidence of parental outreach, strong literacy decision-making teams, and literacy leadership of RTA teachers. They reported serving large numbers in interventions and were focused on exiting students. These desk audits received a score of *Very Evident* 75% of the time.

FIDELITY TO INTERVENTION PROGRAM. RTA teachers and principals were asked about whether their intervention programs were being implemented with fidelity and as stated in their original grant proposal. Evaluators noted if RTA schools were using the intervention program(s) and instructional practices consistently and accurately, as they were intended to be used. The majority of RTA schools were rated as *Somewhat Evident* (45%) in the area of fidelity to intervention program(s) (N=144). Other ratings were *Very Evident* (13%), *Evident* (26%) and *Not Evident* (15%) (Figure 12). Of all key areas, this area was most frequently scored *Not Evident* indicating components of the delivered intervention did not always match specific program guidelines.

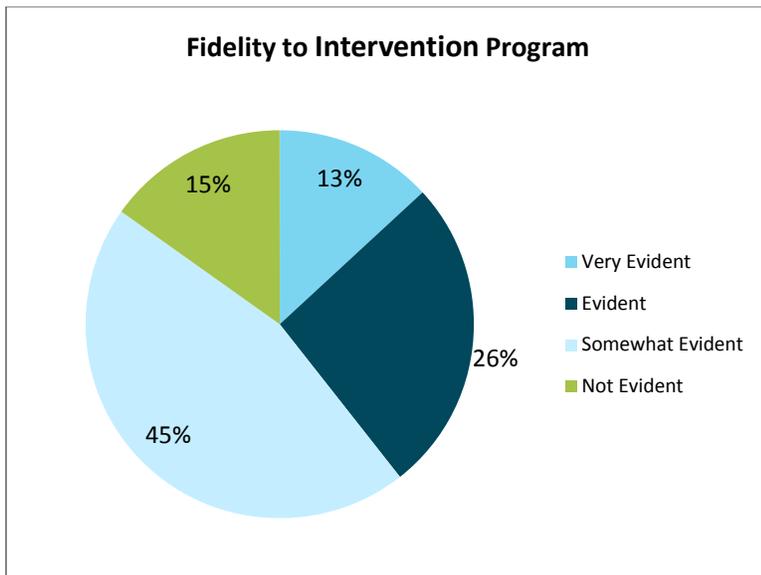


Figure 12. Percentage of RTA schools receiving each score

In contrast, schools in the top 10% of desk audits provided more detail about their intervention lesson formats, the five essential components of reading, and ongoing professional training. They displayed a strong commitment to their grant-approved reading intervention programs. These desk audits received a score of *Very Evident* 78% of the time.

AWARENESS OF RTA AND ITS COMPONENTS. Information was gleaned from desk audits to assess respondents’ general awareness of the RTA grant program and its components. Evaluators looked for evidence that desk audits reflected knowledge of the overall RTA program as well as their school’s individual grant requirements. Most RTA schools were rated as *Evident* (50%) or *Somewhat Evident* (33%) in this area. Fifteen percent of the schools showed *Very Evident* awareness of RTA and its components, while 3% were rated *Not Evident* (Figure 13). Scores indicated schools had a general awareness of RTA components despite not always implementing the components as outlined.

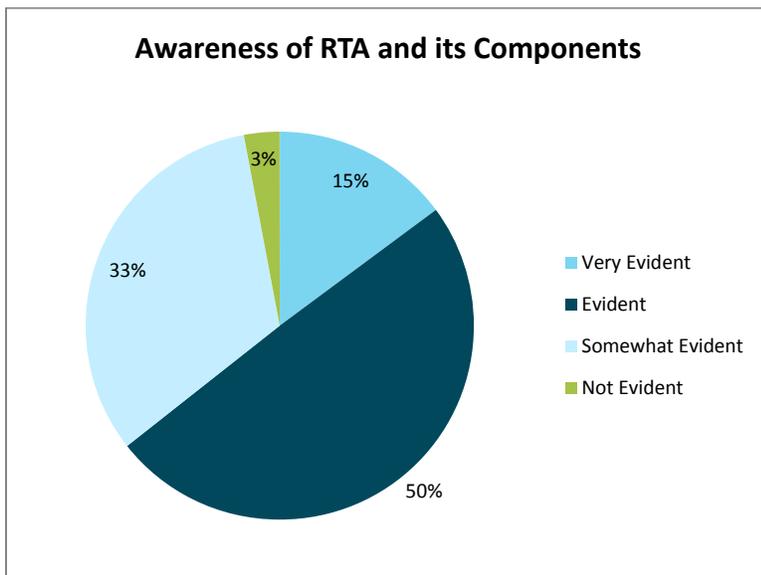


Figure 13. Percentage of RTA schools receiving each score.

In comparison, high scoring desk audits provided more information about their individual and statewide RTA grant requirements including details of the RTA teachers’ formal and informal collaboration with classroom teachers and parents, their professional learning and their sharing of knowledge with others. These desk audits received a score of *Very Evident* 94% of the time.

THOUGHTFUL REFLECTION AND PLANNING DURING AUDIT PROCESS. Schools' were assessed for the thoughtful reflection and planning they used in completing the desk audit process. Evaluators noted whether information was detailed, accurate and specific to their intervention program. Evidence of future planning and goals were also noted. Ratings were rather evenly distributed between *Very Evident* (27%), *Evident* (31%) and *Somewhat Evident* (33%) for thoughtful reflection and planning. Only 9% of the schools were rated as *Not Evident* (Figure 14). Scores indicate that RTA schools used the desk audit process to consider and reflect on their RTA program implementation and plan for the future.

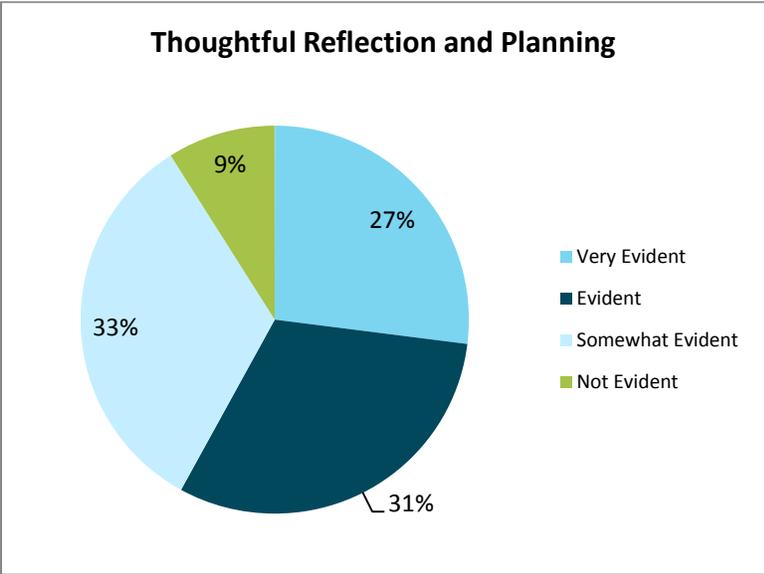


Figure 14. Percentage of RTA schools receiving each score.

The top scoring desk audits appeared to provide an authentic assessment of the RTA program at their school, providing detailed and thoughtful information, reflecting on mistakes or deficits and discussing changes needed in their programs. These desk audits received a score of *Very Evident* 91% of the time.

STUDENT GROWTH. By grade level, respondents were asked to consider their students’ average beginning-of-the-year and average mid-year or end-of-the-year universal screener scores to reflect on student growth. Scores were compared to mean norm data for each screener to assess growth during the year. Some schools reported universal screener scores that could not be compared to national norms or data that was unclear. At times, teachers reported students’ average beginning of year scores that were at or near the mean for each grade level. With these limitations in mind, the reported student growth was assessed to be *Evident* (42% of schools) and *Somewhat Evident* (41% of schools) most of the time. Student growth was assessed as *Very Evident* in 15% of the schools and *Not Evident* in only 2% of schools (Figure 15). Though there were some limitations to scoring all schools in this area, the majority of desk audits scored *Evident* or *Somewhat Evident* indicating that student reading growth did move in a positive direction.

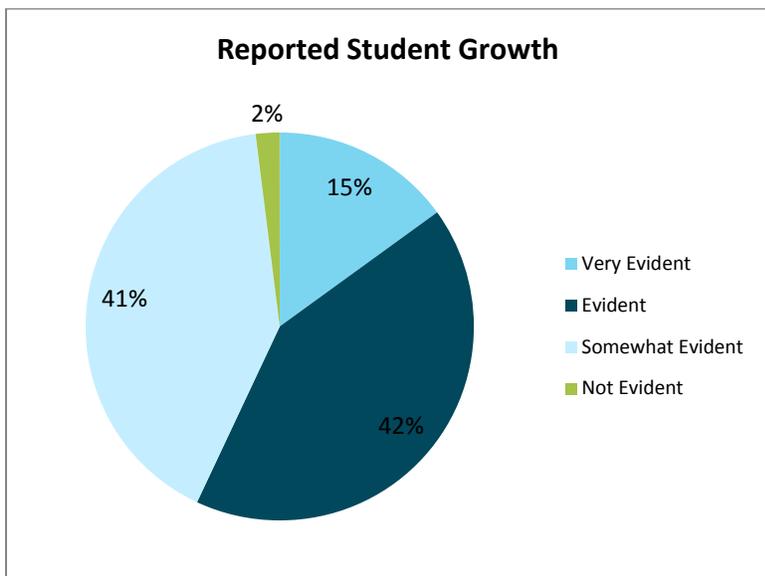


Figure 15. Percentage of RTA schools receiving each score.

In comparison, high scoring schools more often used screeners that could be compared to national norms, showed evidence of student growth and appeared to be serving only struggling readers. These schools received a score of *Very Evident* 50% of the time.

COMPARING HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Throughout this evaluation characteristics of high performing RTA schools have been highlighted. For the schools in the top 10% of desk audits, the data indicates that these schools mirrored many of the characteristics of high-implementing RTA programs identified in

previous case study school RTA evaluations (2012-2013 and 2013- 2014). Table 14 below shows how the characteristics identified in the 2012- 2013 and 2013-2014 RTA evaluations compares to the data collected in this year’s desk audit.

Table 14

Comparing Characteristics of High Implementation and Top Performing Desk Audit Schools

Characteristics of High Implementation (RTA Case Study School Evaluations, 2013/2014)	Characteristics of Top Performing Schools (2016 Desk Audit)
High implementing RTA teachers are well prepared to teach their interventions and participate in continued professional learning. They also increase their impact by sharing knowledge with other teachers within their schools and districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of RTA teachers using intervention that provides the most hours of training • 66% of RTA teachers showed <i>Very Evident</i> sharing of knowledge with others.
High implementing RTA teachers maintain an active caseload that enables them to serve relatively large numbers of students effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTA programs were serving above average numbers (37 students) with 56% of programs serving all primary grade levels
High implementing RTA teachers spend the majority of their time working directly with students and use evidence-based practices in their instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 65% of schools it was <i>Very Evident</i> that RTA teachers had few non-intervention duties devoting most of their time to providing direct interventions to students.
High implementing RTA teachers have strong collaborative relationships with classroom teachers, creating powerful literacy resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% of RTA teachers appeared to be using only grant-approved programs. • 93% of schools reported <i>Very Evident</i> collaboration between RTA teachers and other shareholders.
High implementing RTA teachers assume many literacy roles in their schools. They are an integral part of the intervention decision-making process and take on literacy leadership duties in their schools and districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy leadership appeared <i>Very Evident</i> in 28 (87.5%) of these schools while only one school was rated Not Evident on literacy leadership.
In high implementing RTA schools, interventions are flexible and students move between interventions frequently as needed based on assessment data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility of the RTA intervention experience appeared to be <i>Very Evident</i> in 56% of these schools.
High implementing RTA schools have an organized and clearly defined exiting process and make decisions as a team. This helps them serve more students by moving them fluidly between the interventions they need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of schools were found to be <i>Very Evident</i> in exiting students from RTA interventions.
High implementing RTA schools strengthen their program by involving parents in the RTA process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental outreach and involvement is <i>Very Evident</i> in almost all (90%) of the highest scoring schools.
High implementing RTA schools have data-driven decision-making teams with the RTA teachers serving as team leaders. These strong collaborative literacy teams are essential components to establishing successful systems of interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 90% of schools it is <i>Very Evident</i> that the school has a literacy decision-making team. • In 13% of schools the RTA teacher appeared to be the leader of a literacy team.

Table 14 highlights the commonalities and differences between the findings, providing further support for characteristics of high implementation found in prior evaluations. In the 2013-2014 RTA evaluation evidence indicated that implementation of key features of RTA (teacher preparation, leadership, collaboration, and literacy teams) was positively related to student achievement in RTA schools. Further analysis of high performing desk audit schools and student achievement data is needed to explore the relationship between implementation of RTA and student learning.

CHAPTER 7: BENEFITS AND BARRIERS

Shareholders' perceptions of RTA program benefits and barriers also helped to describe the RTA program. RTA teacher, classroom teacher and administrator surveys provided the opportunity for shareholders to list the single most important benefit and the single most significant challenge of their schools RTA program.

BENEFITS

Open-ended responses (RTA teachers N= 305, Classroom teachers N = 473, and Administrators (N = 140) were analyzed and organized, when possible, to reflect common themes. Data indicated that the greatest benefit of the KY RTA Grant Program was that the interventions helped struggling students make progress in reading.

The following quotes illustrate the importance of helping students become more confident and excited about reading as they make gains in their reading proficiency.

Our school was in GREAT need of an intervention program and I am truly thankful to have it here at (my school). This is only our second year into the program and we have already seen SO much progress among those students who were falling between the cracks. The most important benefit of our school's RTA program has been the intense, deliberate, and focused individualized instruction for our struggling readers. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

...All of my students are progressing and are more confident, they look forward to reading group and are excited to read. These students feel successful and want to learn. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

(The RTA program) makes struggling students aware of literacy skills and strategies they can use when reading. These skills often help struggling students become successful within their regular reading group. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

Our RTA program is able to service the neediest students in 1st grade, many showing accelerated growth, and they will move on to 2nd grade ready! Students enter below grade level and exit either on or above grade level! They exit with a love of reading! (RTA Teacher, 2016)

I have been able to service so many students using Reading Mastery and we are seeing HUGE gains... The children that were timid and insecure in their abilities

are now blossoming and showing great confidence and a love for reading. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

Having an RTA teacher has provided struggling students with the assistance they need to be successful in the classroom. I have seen SO much progress from these students. Couldn't be happier! (Classroom teacher, 2016)

As she (the RTA teacher) directly works with children and increases the abilities of the children, teachers are observing and increasing in their competency as well. (Administrator, 2016)

Many respondents described the benefits of having a literacy expert in the school.

The RTA Program helps provide a Literacy Specialist, not only for the children in the greatest need, but also an advocate for Literacy Best Practices for the entire school. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

(I am) providing professional development for our k-4 and special education staff on Reading Recovery and CIM strategies and close collaboration with the those teachers including modeling lessons. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

Most important is the sharing and modeling of "good" research based strategies with primary teachers and other stakeholders in an effort to reach every struggling reader/writer we can. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

(The RTA teacher) is a WONDERFUL resource of information regarding guided reading, helping struggling readers. She has great knowledge about reading levels and strategies to help teach struggling readers. She is willing to help me out with picking level readers. If I have questions, she gives me ideas as to what I can do during small group to help with kids. (Classroom Teacher 2016)

(The RTA teacher) is an AMAZING teacher and a wonderful resource for our school. The level of students is so diverse upon entry into 1st grade. The knowledge and collaborative efforts are the ONLY reason that I was able to move so many students to proficiency this year in reading.(Classroom teacher, 2016)

The RTA teacher is very helpful to me. Being a new teacher I often go to her for help and resources. I feel my students have greatly benefited from working with her. (Classroom Teacher, 2016)

We are able to employ an expert in reading. (The RTA teacher) is able to work with students and move students. She is able to share instructional strategies with classroom teachers, instructional assistants, and other teachers in the district. Her expertise has been the driving force in improving the reading instructional practice throughout our building. (Administrator, 2016).

BARRIERS

304 RTA teachers, 363 classroom teachers and 137 administrators reported barriers in their survey responses. Data was analyzed and organized by common themes. Many shareholders responded that the single most significant challenge to schools' RTA programs was the inability to serve all struggling students.

It is painful to see the students I don't have spots for and know exactly what their needs are. We have so many needy students in classrooms. The teachers do not have the time to work with them individually. I would love to have other RR/CIM teachers working with our students... (RTA Teacher, 2016)

I wish more children could have this experience. I think it's important to learn from your RTA teacher because the program is so effective. However, there are limited spots for the program and it's hard to set out time to collaborate and observe the RTA teacher. (Classroom teacher, 2016)

There are SO VERY MANY students who could benefit from the services, and only one teacher to provide them! (Classroom teacher, 2016)

The biggest challenge that we face is providing all of the students services who so desperately need (them). We often have more students in need of services than are able to be placed. However, these students are placed on a waiting list and then moved into a group or Reading Recovery position as other students exit. When the grant was first established we were fortunate to have 2 RTA teachers and that was ideal. (Administrator, 2016)

Many RTA teachers and administrators recognized the funding challenges within their schools.

The RTA grant greatly helps (with funding) but for teachers with 15 plus years' experience, the grant leaves a lot of salary for my school to absorb. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

We are unable to attend the national RR conference, which is vital to implementing the best practices into instruction, due to lack of funding. Funding issues also limit the availability of books to use during instruction as well as the availability of consumable materials that are necessary for successful daily lessons. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

The amount of the grant does not cover the teacher's salary, which must be supplemented. Due to Title 1 cuts, this money will come from the general budget which will impact other areas of the school function. While our RTA teacher gains experience and gets better each year, which is what the students need, her salary also grows, making it more difficult to cover. (Administrator, 2016)

When hiring, I can't necessarily take the best candidate because they would be so expensive to employ. (Administrator, 2016)

Another significant barrier noted by shareholders was the difficulty scheduling interventions within the school day so that students stayed focused and did not miss core classes.

As a large school, the most difficult challenge for us is developing scheduled pull-out times for accommodating all students that does not conflict with instruction in other content areas. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

It's hard to keep kids on track when they are pulled out. Some kids are pulled out for more than just reading intervention, and that makes it hard for the classroom teacher because we feel like we are trying to get them caught up when they return to class. I understand that they need to be pulled to fill gaps, I just worry about other gaps it may create. (Classroom teacher, 2016)

We have a large population of students that are in need of intervention but a limited amount of time in the interventionist's day. (Administrator, 2016)

Additionally, some RTA teachers identified the challenge of providing quality literacy instruction throughout the day. RTA teachers expressed the need for “solid, consistent and informed classroom instruction”.

Acceleration with the most struggling students takes quality, daily classroom instruction along with the Reading Recovery lessons. When quality classroom literacy instruction doesn't happen, it is a bigger challenge for the RTA teacher to ensure success of the intervention. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

(A challenge is) making sure that the teachers have the expertise to meet the needs of the struggling readers in the classroom during their core instruction. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

Classroom teachers lack training in successful guided reading practices. It often becomes a one-sided problem that falls upon the interventionist. PD is often devoted to another focus and there is no time within the school day to provide training to newer teachers who are lacking in the necessary skills. (RTA Teacher, 2016)

Shareholders' perceptions about RTA programs provide rich detail about the benefits and challenges that schools are experiencing in implementing these state-funded intervention programs.

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Read to Achieve Grant Program, established since 2005, is intended to help ensure students' reading proficiency by the end of the primary grades by providing schools with funds used primarily for hiring an intervention teacher who provides short-term, intensive instruction to students struggling with reading.

The purpose of the 2015-2016 KY RTA grant program evaluation was to more fully understand RTA program implementation across RTA schools and determine if the program was having a positive effect on participants' reading skills. The main focus of the evaluation was to describe the KY RTA grant program, examine the implementation of RTA programs, and assess KY RTA grant program outcomes. New in this year's evaluation was exploring RTA implementation through a 3rd year optional desk audit administered by the Kentucky Department of Education. A summary of findings and limitations of the study are presented, as well as recommendations for future evaluations.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- **RTA TEACHERS AND THEIR ROLES.** RTA teachers are experienced educators and have advanced degrees with most having over four years of experience as RTA teachers.
- RTA teachers were found to assume many literacy roles in their schools and are viewed as schoolwide literacy leaders by classroom teachers and administrators. Classroom teachers reported strong collaboration with RTA teachers. RTA teachers were part of literacy decision-making teams which often include classroom teachers and principals. Most RTA teachers specifically indicated they would like to increase their impact by sharing their literacy knowledge with other teachers.

- **RTA PROGRAM EXPERIENCES.** RTA enables schools to serve thousands of primary-aged students who are struggling with reading. A total of 10,298 students were served in RTA intervention programs in the 2015-2016 academic year. An average of 33 intervention students were served by each RTA program, with all primary grades being served in almost half of the RTA programs. Most students began RTA interventions within the first three weeks of school.
- More RTA students successfully exited their RTA interventions than in the 2014-2015 academic year. In particular, high performing RTA schools appeared to be exiting students from interventions more frequently.

- **RTA PROGRAM USE.** RTA Programs provided different amounts of training to their RTA teachers with some interventionists receiving extensive, on-going training. Most high performing schools used Reading Recovery, the intervention that provided the most training throughout the school year.
- Across the board, RTA teachers reported relatively high levels of confidence in teaching interventions.
- The majority of RTA programs used only grant-approved intervention programs but some RTA schools continued to use non-grant approved reading intervention programs and practices with at least some students. The RTA teachers continued to receive training in these programs and expressed more confidence in teaching them than in most grant-approved interventions.

- **RTA STUDENT OUTCOMES.** The data indicated that RTA students in Kindergarten, 2nd grade and 3rd grade were making overall greater gains than the predicted average growth and were closing achievement gaps. Kindergarten, 2nd and 3rd grade RTA students showed significantly higher growth than national normed growth.

- **BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF RTA.** RTA grant programs helped students become more confident and excited about reading as they made gains in their reading proficiency.
- Schools benefited from having a literacy expert who supported literacy best practices in the school.
- In most RTA schools not all struggling readers received RTA services due to varying constraints of the programs and limitations of school resources.
- The majority of RTA schools supplemented grant funds in order to pay for the RTA program or teachers. Administrators recognized that funding challenges affect which teachers they hire and how these teachers are trained.

- **COMPARING HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS.** In desk audits, high performing schools mirrored many of the characteristics of high implementation identified in previous evaluations, providing further support for these key characteristics.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

NO COMMON ASSESSMENT. To explore student outcomes, the current evaluation relied on MAP assessment data. With only half of RTA schools using the MAP assessment this year, not all RTA schools were included in the evaluation of student outcomes. Additionally, MAP is frequently, although not always, used at three time points—fall, winter, and spring. However, there is no way to assure that students’ fall assessment scores reflect pre-intervention literacy skills and that spring assessment scores reflect post-intervention literacy skills since RTA students begin

and end interventions at differing points during the school year. Despite the limitations, using MAP data, was still the best available option and highlights the need for a common assessment among RTA schools.

LACK OF CLASSROOM TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY DATA. Important survey data was gathered from classroom teachers and administrators working in RTA schools. However, only 108 of 320 RTA schools were represented in the classroom teachers' survey data and only 144 of 320 schools were represented in the administrators' survey data. This year's evaluation yielded an unusually low number of survey respondents and provides an incomplete picture of statewide RTA programs.

INVENTION TAB PROBLEMS. This was the only the second year RTA teachers were required to enter RTA program data on the Intervention Tab of Infinite Campus. With their relative inexperience using a new system, issues with data entry were noted. Some data appeared unclear and incomplete and some students were entered more than once with different information making analysis challenging. Evaluators used detailed selection criteria in an effort to correctly identify RTA student data.

USE OF NON-GRANT APPROVED INTERVENTIONS. In addition to the RTA grant-approved reading intervention programs, approximately 15% of RTA teachers reported using non-grant approved programs and practices with at least some students. This use of these non-grant approved programs creates some variation in implementation results and made it difficult to compare outcomes across all RTA schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUE TO OFFER THE KY RTA GRANT PROGRAM AT RTA SCHOOLS. Shareholders expressed student need exceeding RTA program capacity. RTA teachers were not always able to reach all students who needed the intervention services. Expanded funding is needed to reach more students.

COMMON ASSESSMENT. Due to RTA schools using a wide variety of reading assessments, only 3964 of 10,298 RTA students (those with MAP scores) were included in the analysis of student achievement outcomes. A common reading assessment, used by all RTA schools, would allow evaluators to more accurately measure the impact of the RTA program on student reading achievement. Additionally, a common assessment would clarify the selection and progress monitoring of RTA students across the state.

NON-GRANT APPROVED INTERVENTIONS. Some schools appear committed to using non-grant approved interventions. Providing additional evidence-based intervention options may encourage schools to find grant-approved programs that better meet their needs.

CONSISTENT TRAINING FOR RTA TEACHERS. RTA programs provided different amounts of training to their RTA teachers with some interventionists receiving extensive, on-going training. Extensive training is needed for all RTA interventionists.

RTA TEACHER LEADERSHIP. RTA teachers are already acting as informal leaders within their schools. Emphasizing this role by promoting leadership training or certificates for the RTA teachers would formally identify them as leaders in their school.

TRAINING FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS. Since RTA students spend the majority of their day with classroom teachers, these teachers need training in best literacy practices. RTA teachers should share their literacy knowledge with others in their schools and districts. Additionally, the RTA grant program could provide specialized literacy training for classroom teachers to build literacy best practices within RTA schools.

FOCUS ON EXITING. While the percentage of students exiting RTA increased this year, exiting of RTA students is not always happening. Closer analysis of high performing schools may identify ways to improve the exiting process.

FURTHER EXPLORE DESK AUDIT DATA . The desk audit process allowed RTA programs to describe their RTA implementation in detail. Additional review of this data may provide better understanding of how variation in RTA implementation impacts RTA students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RTA TEACHER SURVEY, FALL

About your school

School District

School Name

How many years has your school had the RTA grant (including this year)? ____

About the Intervention

How many weeks after the start of the school year did you begin RTA intervention instruction (not testing) with most of your students? ____ weeks

Please select the grade(s) your RTA program serves:

- Kindergarten
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- 6th
- Other: _____

Select the program you are using for each grade (you may select more than one program if needed). If your RTA program serves students from a certain grade, but does not have a specific intervention selected for that grade select "No intervention."

	EIR	Reading Recovery	CIM	Reading Mastery	Other	No intervention
K	<input type="checkbox"/>					
1 st	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2 nd	<input type="checkbox"/>					

3 rd	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4 th	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5 th	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6 th	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other grade	<input type="checkbox"/>					

[If other program selected]

Please list "other" program you are using for [K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, ...]: _____

Program specific questions

[Program name entered based on selection from above section; repeated depending on the number of grant-approved programs they selected]

What is the average group size for [PROGRAM] (if one-on-one, please enter 1)? _____ students

How many years have you been teaching [PROGRAM] (including this year)? _____ years

How many hours of training for [PROGRAM] have you received since July 1, 2015? _____ hours

[If >0 hours of training...]

What was the nature of this training?

- Fact to face
- Webinar
- Graduate class
- Other (please specify): _____

What is the level of confidence you have teaching [PROGRAM]

- Very confident
- Fairly confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

Student selection

Who is responsible for deciding which students will participate in RTA? Please check all that apply:

- RTA funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal
- Other administrator
- Parent
- Counselor
- Other (please specify): _____

How are students selected for RTA intervention? Please check all that apply:

- Referral from classroom teacher
- Referral from parent
- Informal data on general classroom performance
- Past RTA participation
- Performance on diagnostic screener
- Other (please specify): _____

[If “performance on universal screener” selected...]

Name of diagnostic screener: _____

Education and Experience

What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Bachelors of Arts/Bachelors of Science
- Rank 2/5th Year
- Masters
- Rank 1
- Doctorate
- National Board Certified

[If Rank 2, Rank 1, MA, Doctorate selected]

In what area is your postgraduate degree? _____

Do you have a Reading and Writing endorsement or Specialist degree?

- Yes
- No

How many total years of teaching experience do you have (including this year)? _____

How many years of experience do you have as an *RTA teacher* (including this year)? _____

Demographic Information

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Race/Ethnicity:

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/ Latino
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Two or more races
- Other: _____

APPENDIX B: RTA TEACHER SURVEY, SPRING

About your school

School District

School Name

How many primary classroom teachers are at your school?

- Kindergarten teachers
- 1st grade teachers
- 2nd grade teachers
- 3rd grade teachers
- 4th grade teachers
- 5th grade teachers

Formal RTA team

Does your school have a formally identified literacy or RTA team?

- Yes
- No

[If “yes” ...]

How many members are on the literacy or RTA team? _____ members

Please identify members of the RTA team (or RTI team if RTA fits into your school’s RTA or system of intervention team) at your school. Check all that apply:

- RTA funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal
- Other administrator
- Parent
- Other (please specify): _____

How frequently does the formal RTA team meet?

- As needed
- Twice a year
- Four times a year
- Once a month
- Twice a month

- Once a week
- 2 or 3 times per week
- Daily
- Other: _____

Who is responsible for leading formal RTA team meetings?

- RTA funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal
- Other administrator
- Parent
- Other (please specify): _____

About the Intervention

Select the program you are using for each grade (you may select more than one program if needed). If your RTA program serves students from a certain grade, but does not have a specific intervention selected for that grade select "No intervention."

	EIR	Reading Recovery	CIM	Reading Mastery	Other	No intervention	Do not serve
K	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1 st	<input type="checkbox"/>						
2 nd	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3 rd	<input type="checkbox"/>						

[If other program selected]

Please list "other" program you are using for [K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd]: _____

Program specific questions

[Program name entered based on selection from above section; repeated depending on the number of programs they selected]

How many hours of training for [PROGRAM] have you received since January 1, 2016? _____ hours

[If >0 hours of training...]

What was the nature of this training?

- Fact to face
- Webinar
- Graduate class
- Other (please specify): _____

What is the level of confidence you have teaching [PROGRAM]

- Very confident
- Fairly confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

Collaboration and Communication

Please indicate how often you communicate about RTA students with classroom teachers who have your intervention students.

- Never
- 2-3 times a year
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Daily

Have you adjusted your classroom instruction for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with classroom teachers who have your intervention students?

- Yes
- No

[If "yes" ...]

What components of your classroom instruction have you adjusted for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with the classroom teachers? Please check all that apply:

- Reading material
- Method of providing instruction
- Grouping
- Instructional content/skills
- Other: _____

Please indicate how frequently you collaborated with your school’s traditional classroom teachers in the following ways:

Together, classroom teachers and I...

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Selected teaching materials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Planned my RTA classroom instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Planned their classroom instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Identified a student for intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Released a student from intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shared instructional strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Developed professional development activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Consulted on students’ progress	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Worked together with students in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Monitored student progress	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Additional questions

When do students at your school receive the RTA intervention?

- During regular classroom literacy time
- During other content instruction time (e.g., science, social studies, math)
- Varies based on schedule
- During a dedicated, school-wide intervention time

- Other (please specify): _____

What could you implement to help impact student learning at your school within the structure of your school environment?

Student program exit

Who is responsible for deciding when students exit RTA? Please check all that apply:

- RTA funded teacher(s)
- Data coordinator
- Primary level classroom teacher(s)
- Principal
- Other administrator
- Parent
- Counselor
- Other (please specify): _____

What are the exit criteria for a student to SUCCESSFULLY exit RTA services? Please check all that apply:

- No specified criteria have been set
- Grade level reading
- Met established goals and reading level
- Achieved target score on assessment
- Classroom performance as judged by the classroom teacher
- Other (please specify): _____

[If “achieved target score on assessment” selected...]

Name of assessment: _____

In your opinion, why don't students successfully exit the RTA intervention?

Un-served students

How many students during the 2015 – 2016 school year were considered eligible for reading intervention AND did not receive instruction from the RTA intervention teacher: _____ students

[If # of students >0...]

What happened to those students?

- Placed on a waiting list
- Serviced by another interventionist in the school
- Serviced by the classroom teachers

- No services
- Other (please specify): _____

Challenges and Benefits

The single most important benefit of your school's RTA program is:

The single most significant challenge of your school's RTA program is:

APPENDIX C: CLASSROOM TEACHER SURVEY

About your school

School District

School Name

Demographic Information

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Race/Ethnicity:

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/ Latino
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Two or more races
- Other: _____

Education and Experience

What grade(s) do you teach? Please check all that apply:

- Kindergarten
- 1st grade
- 2nd grade
- 3rd grade
- Other: _____

How many years of teaching experience do you have (including this year)? _____

Is this your first year teaching at *this* school?

- Yes
- No

What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- Bachelors of Arts/Bachelors of Science

- Rank 2/5th Year
- Masters
- Rank 1
- Doctorate

Do you have either of the following certificates?

National Board Certified Teacher Yes No

Reading or Literacy Specialist Certification Yes No

Collaboration and Communication

Please indicate how often you communicate about RTA students with the RTA intervention teacher:

- Never
- 2-3 times a year
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Daily

Have you adjusted your classroom instruction for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with your school's RTA intervention teacher?

- Yes
- No

[If YES...]

What components of your classroom instruction have you adjusted for RTA students based on the feedback and/or communication with your school's RTA intervention teacher? Please check all that apply:

- Reading materials
- Method of providing instruction
- Grouping
- Instructional content/skills
- Other: _____

Please indicate how frequently you collaborated with your school's RTA teacher in the following ways:

Together, my RTA teacher and I...

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

Selected teaching materials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Planned RTA classroom instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Planned my classroom instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Identified a student for intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Released a student from intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shared instructional strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Developed professional development activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Consulted on students' progress	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Worked together with students in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Monitored student progress	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Involvement in RTA

In what ways were you involved in your school's RTA intervention program (in some capacity) this school year? Please check all that apply.

- Participated in literacy team meetings
- Participated in professional development conducted by RTA teacher
- Received assistance from RTA teacher related to your instruction
- Observed RTA teacher

Not involved

About your students

How many students in your classroom have received reading intervention services from the RTA teacher this year? _____

[If > 0...]

How many of these students have successfully exited RTA intervention to less intensive reading instruction? _____

How many of these student are involved in or have completed a referral process for special education services? _____

About your RTA Teacher

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the RTA/intervention teacher:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Attends decision-making literacy intervention meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leads decision making literacy intervention meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provides training for others in their school and/or district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lessons are observed by teachers to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lessons are observed by parents to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lessons are observed by administrators to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

enhance the learning and/or understanding of others

Collaborates with classroom teachers (frequent and regular meetings/check-ins about intervention students)

Coordinates and/or performs progress monitoring duties for their intervention students as well as other Rtl students at their school

Takes a leadership role in family literacy nights

Serves as a literacy resource to others (teachers/parents ask questions, seek advice, get new strategies, etc.)

Collaborates with parents (initiates regular contact, sends home books/materials, shares progress monitoring data, invites them in for observations/conferences)

Is an integral part of the Rtl decision-making process

Is viewed as a literacy leader by others in the school

Is active in a larger literacy community (district, region, state)

Challenges and Benefits

The single most important benefit of your school's RTA program is:

The single most significant challenge of your school's RTA program is:

APPENDIX D: ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

About your school

School District

School Name

Demographic Information

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Race/Ethnicity:

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/ Latino
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Two or more races
- Other: _____

Role and experience

What is your role at the school?

- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Other: _____

How long have many years (including this year) have you been an administrator at this school? ____

Funding

How much money does your school receive annually as part of the Read to Achieve grant? _____

Please indicate what percentage of that fund is allotted to each of the following (if none, indicate that by 0)

RTA teacher salary _____

Intervention Materials _____

- Intervention Program _____
- Progress monitoring tool/Assessments _____
- Professional development/training _____
- Other _____

Do you supplement the funds for the grant to pay for the RTA interventionist or teacher?

- Yes
- No

[If YES...]

How much money does your school contribute to supplement the RTA program or teacher? _____

What funding sources do you use to supplement the RTA program or teacher?

- Title I funds
- Special education funds
- General funds
- District funds
- Other: _____

About your RTA teacher

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the RTA/intervention teacher:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Attends decision-making literacy intervention meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leads decision making literacy intervention meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provides training for others in their school and/or district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lessons are observed by teachers to enhance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

the learning and/or understanding of others

Lessons are observed by parents to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others

Lessons are observed by administrators to enhance the learning and/or understanding of others

Collaborates with classroom teachers (frequent and regular meetings/check-ins about intervention students)

Coordinates and/or performs progress monitoring duties for their intervention students as well as other RTI students at their school

Takes a leadership role in family literacy nights

Serves as a literacy resource to others (teachers/parents ask questions, seek advice, get new strategies, etc.)

Collaborates with parents (initiates regular contact, sends home books/materials, shares progress monitoring data, invites them in for observations/conferences)

Is an integral part of the RTI decision-making process

Is viewed as a literacy leader by others in the school

Is active in a larger literacy community (district, region, state)

Challenges and Benefits

The single most important benefit of your school's RTA program is:

The single most significant challenge of your school's RTA program is:

Additional Questions

In the desk audit conducted this past winter, please indicate the percentage you contributed to the process and final submission. _____%

APPENDIX E: DESK AUDIT FOR 3RD YEAR EXTENSION

For KDE use only
School Code: _____



According to the original Request for Application (RFA, page 3): “After a two-year period, RTA schools will be eligible to request a grant renewal for a third year. Renewal will depend on evidence of successful implementation of all RTA program components and demonstrated student progress.”

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Reflect on your school’s implementation of the RTA grant program. Please include your authentic assessment of each component. Also, explain your plan for continued success and/or next steps to make appropriate growth.

Most of these questions are open-ended and invite you to communicate what you want us to know about your school’s implementation of the RTA grant program. This may include strengths and barriers in the RTA implementation process as well as explanations of circumstances unique to your school. Please be as concise as possible in your answers.

Refer to your original grant proposal during this process.

Section 1

RTA grant-approved program is being successfully implemented: Think about what your original proposal listed as your intervention program(s). Are you implementing the RTA program as proposed? Explain.

Intervention programs implemented in RTA this year (2015-2016). (Check all that apply)

EIR RR CIM RM
 Other (Please list) _____

Reflection & Rationale:

Continuation Plan/Next Steps:

Section 2

Fidelity to grant-approved program: Please describe how your school implements the intervention program(s) with fidelity. Discuss the extent to which your program meets the needs of your RTA students. Include in your discussion supplemental intervention materials you feel would enhance the support your program provides to your students.

Reflection & Rationale:

Continuation Plan/Next Steps:

Section 3

RTA Teacher's time and schedule are appropriate (according to RFA guidelines).

Reflection & Rationale:

Continuation Plan/Next Steps:

Section 4

Webcasts (participation and punctual confirmation both for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 academic year)

- During the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, indicate the total number of webcasts in which you participated. _____

Reflection & Rationale:

Continuation Plan/Next Steps:

Section 5

Schoolwide Universal Screener

- What is your school’s primary universal screener used to assess reading for **all** students (other than the Brigance for beginning Kindergarten)? Please check **one for each grade level**. If your universal screener is not listed please indicate the formal name of the screener used.

	K	1st	2nd	3rd
MAP				
STAR				
FAST				
DEA (Discovery Ed.)				
AIMSweb				
DIBELS				
Other (please specify)				

- Referring to your universal screener, what is your school’s percentile cut-off mark for students to be considered for RTA/intervention services? (Please check **one**)

5% and below	
10% and below	
15% and below	
20% and below	
25% and below	
30% and below	

35% and below	
40% and below	
Other (please specify)	
Unknown	

Section 6

Demonstrated Student Progress: For this section you will need to gather RTA student data from 2014-2015 as well as 2015-2016. We want you to use the schoolwide universal screener reading scores for all RTA students in that school year. You will need to calculate the **Average Beginning of Year** and **Average End of Year** scores for the 2014-2015 school year for each grade level of RTA students. You will need to calculate the **Average Beginning of Year** and **Average Mid-Year** scores for the 2015-2016 school year for each grade level of RTA students.

For Example:

First Grade – There are 3 RTA students at this grade level. The universal screener used at this school is MAP. The students have Beginning of Year MAP reading scores of 140, 155, and 160.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 140 \\
 155 \\
 \hline
 +160 \\
 \hline
 455
 \end{array}
 \qquad
 \begin{array}{l}
 455 \text{ divided by } 3 \text{ students} = 151.67 \\
 151.67 = \text{Average Beginning of Year MAP score for First Grade}
 \end{array}$$

When calculating RTA grade level averages:

- ★ Only include scores for RTA students that have both a beginning score and an end of year (or mid-year for 2015-2016) score.
- ★ Only include scores for students who have participated in RTA at some time during the specified school year.

- ★ Do not include scores for students who dropped out or were removed from the RTA intervention before they received significant targeted intervention in RTA.

Kindergarten

____ I do not serve Kindergarten students in RTA intervention program (skip to First Grade)

2015-2016 Data

- Number of RTA Students served so far this year in Kindergarten: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Kindergarten: _____
- Your calculated Average Mid-Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Kindergarten: _____

First Grade

____ I do not serve First Grade students in RTA intervention program (skip to Second Grade)

2014-2015 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in First Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in First Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average End of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in First Grade: _____

2015-2016 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in First Grade so far this year: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in First Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Mid-Year universal screener score for your RTA students in First Grade: _____

Second Grade

____ I do not serve Second Grade students in RTA intervention program (skip to Third Grade)

2014-2015 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in Second Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Second Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average End of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Second Grade: _____

2015-2016 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in Second Grade so far this year: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Second Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Mid-Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Second Grade: _____

Third Grade

_____ I do not serve Third Grade students in RTA intervention program (skip to reflection)

2014-2015 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in Third Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Third Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average End of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Third Grade: _____

2015-2016 Data

- Number of RTA Students served in Third Grade so far this year: _____
- Your calculated Average Beginning of Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Third Grade: _____
- Your calculated Average Mid-Year universal screener score for your RTA students in Third Grade: _____

Reflect on your school's demonstrated student progress. Please include your authentic assessment of student progress.

- Do you think the data you have reported accurately reflects the growth of students in the RTA intervention program at your school? Please explain.
- Explain your plan for continued success and/or next steps to target appropriate growth.

APPENDIX F: DESK AUDIT SCORING RUBRIC

Cover Sheet			
School Code:			
Overall Rating:			
Overall Score:			
Notes:			
Reported growth by grade level:			
K _____ 1 st _____			
2 nd _____ 3 rd _____			

General			Comments/Details		Score 1-4
1. School provides all requested data.	Yes	No	If no, how many items missing?		
2. School shows evidence of thoughtful reflection in their answers.	Not at all	Occasionally	Usually	To a great extent	

3. School shows evidence of thoughtful continuation and next steps planning.	Not at all	Occasionally	Usually	To a great extent		
RTA Grant-Approved Program						
4. School reports using only grant approved programs.	Yes	No	If no, list other programs:			
5. In the school's view, their implementation of RTA matches their original proposal	Not at all	Occasionally	Usually	To a great extent		
6. School understands and describes following the RTA program(s) with fidelity.	Not at all	Occasionally	Usually	To a great extent		
Teacher Duties						
7. School reports that RTA teacher is full-time reading	Yes	No				

intervention ist.					
8. School reports RTA teacher has significant non-intervention duties.	Yes	No			
Webcasts				Comments/Details	
9. How many webcasts does RTA teacher report viewing in the last 2 school years?	Reported #		Actual #?		
10. Was confirmation punctual in their view?	Yes	No	Actual?		
Student Data					
11. Do they name an appropriate universal screener?	Yes	No	Screener Used:		
12. Grade levels they are serving:	K	1st	2nd	3rd	
13. Number of students served by	<u>2014-</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	Above average or below average?		

RTA teacher by grade:	<u>15</u> K 1 2 3	K 1 2 3				
14. Does school RTA percentile cut-off make sense?	Yes	No				
15. Do their reported class beginning, mid-year and end of year average scores make sense?	Yes	No				
16. Growth reported Beginning/End Scores 2014-15	K	1st	2nd	3rd		

17. Growth reported	K	1st	2nd	3rd		
Beginning/End Scores 2015-16						

APPENDIX G: CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH IMPLEMENTATION, 2013-2014

RTA Implementation Factors		Characteristics of High RTA Implementation
RTA Teachers	Professional Learning	High implementing RTA teachers are well prepared to teach their interventions and participate in continued professional learning. They also increase their impact by sharing knowledge with other teachers within their schools and districts.
	RTA Teacher Caseload	High implementing RTA teachers maintain an active caseload that enables them to serve relatively large numbers of students effectively.
	Instructional Practices	High implementing RTA teachers spend the majority of their time working directly with students and use evidence-based practices in their instruction.
	Collaboration with Classroom Teachers	High implementing RTA teachers have strong collaborative relationships with classroom teachers, creating powerful literacy resources.
	RTA Teachers' Roles	High implementing RTA teachers assume many literacy roles in their schools. They are an integral part of the intervention decision-making process and take on literacy leadership duties in their schools and districts.
RTA Schools	Flexibility and Fluidity	In high implementing RTA schools, interventions are flexible and students move between interventions frequently as needed based on assessment data.
	Exit Process	High implementing RTA schools have an organized and clearly defined exiting process and make decisions as a team. This helps them serve more students by moving them fluidly between the interventions they need.
	Parent Involvement	High implementing RTA schools strengthen their program by involving parents in the RTA process.
	Team Decision-Making	High implementing RTA schools have data-driven decision-making teams with the RTA teachers serving as team leaders. These strong collaborative literacy teams are essential components to establishing successful systems of interventions.

APPENDIX H: LIST OF DIAGNOSTIC SCREENERS USED BY RTA SCHOOLS

- AIMSWeb
- Brigance Screen III
- Clay's Observation Survey
- DEA
- Derek Betz
- Diane Little/Regina Stamper
- DIBELS
- Discovery Education Assessment
- DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)
- EIR
- FAST
- Fountas and Pinnel
- GRADE
- i-ready
- Keystone
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement
- PAS
- Running Record
- Scott Foresman
- Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT)
- STAR Reading
- Think Link