

HLP 20: Provide Intensive Instruction



High-Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

When students with disabilities are not responding to teacher-led instruction within the general education setting, intensifying instruction can be provided by special education teachers (or other specialists). The National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) promotes a research-based process called Data Based Individualization (DBI). DBI outlines a tight path for using data and evidence-based practices for teachers to make informed decisions regarding instruction for students to make needed improvements in academic and behavioral domains. The DBI process includes the use of an evidence-based curriculum in the specific area of need, ongoing progress monitoring, specific diagnostic testing, team-based decision making, and adjusting instruction (to curriculum, group size, both, etc.) based on the results of student data. The use of intensive intervention aligns closely with HLPs 1-6 and instructional HLPs 11, 12, 16, and 22.

This resource is intended to support school leaders looking to embed the HLPs in professional development, implementation, teacher observation and feedback efforts at their school site.

The major source for content within this resource is the chapter by Devin Kearns, Marney S. Pollack, and Victoria M. Whaley in *High-Leverage Practices in the Inclusive Classroom*; the book *High-Leverage Practices in Special Education: The Final Report of the HLP Writing Team*, and content on www.highleveragepractices.org.

Teachers Who Effectively Promote Active Student Engagement

- Use a research-based secondary prevention program in the Data-Based Individualization (DBI) process.
- Use progress monitoring to track student improvements.
- Create student-specific intensive intervention plans based upon examination of diagnostic assessment data.
- Implement intervention plans, track student responses, and reexamine data as needed, using the following steps of the DBI process:
 - Establish the present level of academic performance;
 - Set an ambitious long-term goal using established norms;
 - Implement high quality instruction or intervention with fidelity;
 - Monitor progress towards the goal;
 - Use decision rules to evaluate the instructional effectiveness and student progress;
 - Generate a hypothesis about student progress to individualize instruction;
 - Make an instructional change based on the chosen hypothesis;
 - Repeat this process throughout the school year, as indicated by data and on a regular schedule.

Tips for School Leaders to Support Teachers

- Ensure educators have a strong repertoire of evidence-based practices and are able to engage in data-based decision-making processes.
- Provide educators with instruction, professional development, and/or coaching in the Data-Based Individualization (DBI) process.
- Provide feedback on the extent to which educators are making accurate and efficient decisions about the impact of intensive instruction occurring across settings.
- Hold teachers and other stakeholders accountable in their roles within the DBI process (e.g., providing intensive instruction, collecting data, monitoring progress, meeting adjusted goals), providing support and/or coaching as deemed necessary.

Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- Why do you think the assessment HLPs are highly reliant upon excellence in implementation of the collaboration HLPs?
- Why is the DBI process such a critical tool for special educators to have in their “toolkits?”
- Why is it so important for special educators and other professionals to use multiple sources of data to make decisions about students?
- What are some of the barriers to successful implementation of the DBI process? What are some potential solutions to those barriers?

References & Additional Resources

Online Resources

National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII)

The mission of the NCII is to build the capacity of state and local education agencies, universities, practitioners, and other stakeholders to support implementation of intensive intervention in reading, mathematics, and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning and/or behavioral needs.

NCII Resources for Trainers & Coaches

Materials, resources, and tools to support intensive intervention implementation at the building, district and/or state levels.

High-Leverage Practices: A Professional Development Guide for School Leaders

A downloadable online guide providing school leaders, including administrators, principals, mentors and coaches, with practical tools for engaging staff members in learning about how high-leverage practices can enhance student learning in the school and district.

Journal Articles

Coyne, M. D., & Koriakin, T. A. (2017). What do beginning special educators need to know about intensive reading interventions? *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 49(4)*, 239–248. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059916688648>

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., & Vaughn, S. (2014). What is intensive instruction and why is it important? *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 46(4)*, 13–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914522966>

Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2009). Creating opportunities for intensive intervention for students with learning disabilities. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 42(2)*, 60–62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990904200207>

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Malone, A. S. (2018). The taxonomy of intervention intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 50(4)*, 194–202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059918758166>

McInerney, M., Zumeta, R. O., Gandhi, A. G., & Gersten, R. (2014). Building and sustaining complex systems: Addressing common challenges to implementing intensive intervention. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 46(4)*, 54–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914523763>

Powell, S. R., & Stecker, P. M. (2014). Using data-based individualization to intensify mathematics intervention for students with disabilities. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 46(4)*, 31–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914523735>

Wehby, J. H., & Kern, L. (2014). Intensive behavior intervention: What is it, what is its evidence base, and why do we need to implement now? *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 46(4)*, 38–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914523956>

