

**Marshall University**  
**Marshall Digital Scholar**

---

Theses, Dissertations and Capstones

---

1-1-2012

# Role of West Virginia School Psychologists in a Response to Intervention Framework

Bryan Anthony Wilson  
[wilson230@marshall.edu](mailto:wilson230@marshall.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://mds.marshall.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [School Psychology Commons](#), and the [Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Wilson, Bryan Anthony, "Role of West Virginia School Psychologists in a Response to Intervention Framework" (2012). *Theses, Dissertations and Capstones*. Paper 315.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations and Capstones by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact [zhangj@marshall.edu](mailto:zhangj@marshall.edu).

**ROLE OF WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN A RESPONSE TO  
INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK**

A thesis submitted to  
the Graduate College of  
Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Education Specialist  
School Psychology

by  
Bryan Anthony Wilson

Approved by

Sandra S. Stroebe, Ph.D., Committee Chairperson  
Fred Jay Krieg, Ph.D.  
Edna Meisel, Ed.D.

Marshall University  
July 2012

## Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank Dr. Stroebel with helping me narrow down my research into a very intriguing topic. You have been a great mentor throughout my studies as well, and I cannot thank you enough for your generosity and kindness. To Dr. Krieg, I cannot begin to thank you for all of the words of wisdom you have provided and the wonderful insight into analyzing my research. To Dr. Meisel, I want to thank you for your hard work and perseverance in helping me analyze and produce my data. You have been a great help, and I can't thank you enough for all the time spent crunching numbers with me. I would also like to thank the WVSPA work group for providing us the data for this research.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
List of Tables.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Chapter 1: Nature and Scope of the Study.....	1
The Response to Intervention Framework.....	3
The School Psychologist Role in RTI.....	4
Need for the Current Study.....	8
Chapter 2: Method.....	12
Chapter 3: Results.....	17
Chapter 4: Discussion.....	18
Appendix A.....	22
Appendix B.....	29
References.....	30

## List of Tables

Table 1.....	33
Table 2.....	34
Table 3.....	35
Table 4.....	36

## ABSTRACT

With the passage of No Child Left Behind in 2001, schools were required to prepare students using research-based teaching methods, interventions, and approaches.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an evidence-based practice that allows schools to assess student responses to interventions. RTI was implemented as a pilot program in West Virginia beginning from 2007 to 2010. Although research has been frequent on implementing RTI, little research has been conducted analyzing RTI and school psychologist involvement, particularly in West Virginia. The purpose of this study was to examine what factors serve as predictors of RTI involvement in West Virginia. The examiner used data from the 2011 West Virginia School Psychologists Association survey to predict RTI Involvement by West Virginia school psychologists. The results indicated no variables significantly predict RTI involvement for West Virginia school psychologists.

# **Role of West Virginia School Psychologists in a Response to Intervention Framework**

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 instructed schools to prepare students with empirically based instruction as well as provide research-based interventions, reading strategies, and approaches (Justice, 2006). NCLB, along with other legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), have led schools to change their strategies to improve student achievement (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004). Among the recent changes includes the implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI). RTI is a collection of techniques that allows schools to assess whether or not students are reacting positively (or negatively) to interventions implemented for them (Canter, 2006). Because RTI is an evidence-based practice, implementation of RTI in school systems has been increasing over the past decade. School psychologists employed in school systems that implemented RTI were forced to adapt and build their knowledge about RTI. Because RTI implementation has been a recent occurrence, evaluations of RTI effectiveness is an area of needed research. With high demand for RTI, it is relevant to research how RTI is functioning within school systems and whether or not it is proving to be effective. Given the push for data-based decision making in RTI, research is needed to understand the role school psychologists should play in implementing RTI.

In 2001, President Bush advocated for education reform with the passage of NCLB. The aim of NCLB was to hold educational systems accountable for the curriculum being taught to students in the United States (Maleyko & Gawlik, 2011).

Reschly (2008) noted multiple education problems that led to that legislation, including low achievement levels, inefficient programs, incoherent evaluation practices, and a lack of scientific-based curriculums and interventions. Schools were to “close the achievement gap between high and low achieving students” with emphasis on minority and other disadvantaged students (Maleyko & Gawlik, 2011, p. 600). To evaluate student progress, each state was to develop and implement its own standardized state assessment. Each state developed certain standards for these assessments, and student scores must meet the chosen standards (Maleyko & Gawlik, 2011). These assessments determined whether or not a school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). If a school system did not meet AYP for a period of time, the given school system would then go into state takeover in order to improve their schools. The enactment of this law placed strong accountability on schools, administration, and school psychologists to improve their educational practice and the achievement of their students.

Another educational reform affecting school psychologists was the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004. Originally implemented in 1975 as the Education for All Handicapped Children’s Act, the statute was designed to protect students with disabilities and provide them with more educational rights (Russo, Osborne, & Borreca, 2005). Reauthorized in 2004, IDEA was programmed to provide the “least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities between the ages of three and 21” (Russo et al., 2005, p. 111). IDEA required schools to implement empirically sound instructional strategies and interventions in order to evaluate eligibility for special education services (Klotz & Canter, 2007; Russo et al., 2005). IDEA also allowed preventative services, such as early and preventative

interventions, for struggling learners (Klotz & Canter, 2007; Russo et al., 2005). Both IDEA and NCLB placed more emphasis on scientifically based instruction and interventions to be used to aid students and schools in meeting AYP and grade level standards (Klotz & Canter, 2007). These legislative changes have taken place during an era in which the education system has been under much scrutiny from the public. There is a substantial need to know if the educational policy of this decade is effective and is likely to continue into the immediate future.

### **The Response to Intervention Framework**

As NCLB, IDEA, and other legislation have been passed placing more accountability on the public education system, much research has been performed to locate new scientifically based processes and programs for the schools. RTI is one evidence-based approach gaining in popularity. RTI consists of numerous procedures allowing for schools to assess how students react to changes in instruction. The instruction method is designed to enhance learning, and enable students to meet standard levels of achievement (Canter, 2006; Klotz & Canter, 2007). RTI can also be used as a tool for identification of students with specific learning disabilities (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

RTI uses a problem solving process implemented through a three-tiered model in which interventions vary in intensity and duration per tier (Canter, 2006; Klotz & Canter, 2007). On the first tier, all students receive scientifically based instruction, and are assessed periodically using curriculum-based measures. If students proceed to “fall below a predetermined point on a benchmark,” then students will be transferred to the second tier (Murawski & Hughes, 2009, p. 268). At this level, students receive additional

instruction time in order to achieve the original benchmark goal. Instruction may be delivered in small groups. If students are still struggling at tier 2, then the students will be moved to tier 3 or will remain at tier 2 for more of the given intervention (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). At tier 3, students may receive additional instruction time, receive instruction in smaller groups, or may be referred for an eligibility assessment for special education (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Students may move either up or down the tiers depending on their progress.

### **The School Psychologist Role in RTI**

In school systems that have implemented RTI, the school psychologist can play a crucial role in the success or failure of the RTI process. Some school psychologists, however, may not play any role at all in RTI. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), there is a strong need for school psychologists to be active in the development and maintenance of RTI in the schools (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006). School psychologists have numerous skills that enable them to function effectively in implementing RTI within their school systems (NASP, 2006). NASP has produced a fact sheet that serves as a model and a guide for school psychologists in the implementation and maintenance of RTI within the system in which they are employed. Three key roles NASP proclaims include system design, team collaboration, and serving individual students (NASP, 2006).

In system design, school psychologists are encouraged to examine research on RTI, help to facilitate change among the administration, complete needs assessments, create evidence-based models, and plan and implement faculty training. School psychologists can also develop achievement norms, introduce pilot programs, monitor

implementation among other local schools, communicate with the school board, and distinguish student needs along with empirically based interventions (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006). As a collaborative team member, school psychologists should consult with faculty in implementing RTI, consult with faculty and parents regarding student needs, develop a set of procedures for practice in RTI, and develop training guidelines. School psychologists should also work with parents, community leaders, and local agencies, and be a mentor while teachers develop progress monitoring skills (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006). To serve individual students, school psychologists must consult with teachers and parents regularly concerning interventions at school and at home, complete progress monitoring demonstrations for faculty members, and perform observations. School psychologists should also monitor cognitive functioning in students, evaluate referral procedures, evaluate students' mental health and functioning, and work with team members on developing goals, teaching strategies, and other procedures (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006). In order for school psychologists to be able to succeed within an RTI framework, they must be open to change, work to continually improve their skills, be willing to adapt, and maintain solid communication among team members (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006).

Although NASP has created this guide for school psychologist involvement in RTI school systems, Sullivan and Long (2010) have given some insight into how RTI is currently functioning within school systems, as well as how school psychologists are involved. The purpose of the study by Sullivan and Long (2010) was to examine practicing school psychologists' perceptions upon their graduate education, their participation in RTI, as well as their own insight on RTI within the school systems in

which they are employed. A total of 557 practicing school psychologists participated in the study. The participants were members of NASP and were contacted through email provided from the NASP database. Consistent with NASP membership, nearly 80% of the participants were female (79.8%) with the overwhelming majority being white (92.6%) and having a specialist/master's degree (67.6%). The participants completed an online survey regarding their role in RTI as well as their accountability and view toward RTI and its influence within the schools. The survey responses were processed and analyzed using simple statistical analysis procedures as the data were not categorical in nature.

The results demonstrated that 9 out of 10 participants had received some type of training in RTI. Most training came from workshops or through presentations, followed by training at their schools, and even fewer received training through graduate coursework. Results also demonstrated that school psychologists who had recently started their careers were more likely to have received graduate training in RTI than experienced school psychologists. More experienced school psychologists were likely to receive on-site training at their schools (Sullivan and Long, 2010). Additionally, school psychologists at non-RTI schools were less likely to have received training in RTI than those psychologists in RTI schools. Results further showed that RTI was currently being implemented, and most participants reported RTI being implemented in their schools for less than 2 years, with most practitioners being involved in the implementation process (Sullivan and Long, 2010). Participants also reported having spent more time on academic interventions at schools using RTI versus their time before RTI was implemented; over half noted a decrease in special education evaluations. Last, school

psychologists in the survey reported that RTI created a positive impact on the school by improving the overall school climate (Sullivan and Long, 2010).

Larson and Choi (2010) also surveyed school psychologists regarding their role in RTI. In their research, Larson and Choi (2010) surveyed school psychologists across the nation regarding their roles as practicing school psychologists within the school systems. An analysis of the surveys completed (204), 70% of school psychologists felt they needed additional training within RTI (Larson & Choi, 2010, p. 109). However, pertinent to the current study, no practicing school psychologists within West Virginia participated in this research (Larson & Choi, 2010). Although NASP has developed guidelines and roles for school psychologists to maintain while implementing and working with RTI, research is scarce on feedback from school psychologists.

As the previous studies demonstrate, RTI is still a relatively new process for most school systems across the country and is still being implemented in many areas (Sullivan & Long, 2010). West Virginia was one of the first states to implement RTI across the entire state. According to the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), RTI was first implemented in 11 elementary schools throughout the state in 2007 (WVDE, 2007). By the year 2010, RTI was implemented in all elementary schools across West Virginia with expansion to the middle and high school levels to be completed by 2012 (WVDE, 2007). As RTI implementation in West Virginia is very recent, little research has been completed in analyzing RTI within the state as well any analysis among West Virginia school psychologists regarding their role within RTI. Little research has been completed across the United States as well regarding school psychologists' role within RTI. Reynolds and Shaywitz (2009) have even argued that RTI is being implemented without

strong empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of RTI. Reynolds and Shaywitz (2009) stated that without empirical evidence for RTI, many models that are being implemented may be negligent toward students and leave the future impact unknown toward students with disabilities.

### **Need for the Current Study**

The need for the current study is based on the lack of research regarding RTI within West Virginia schools. The initial studies after RTI was implemented found mixed results regarding the effectiveness of RTI in West Virginia. Given the state's commitment to RTI, further research is needed to ensure that the enactment of such a program produces a positive academic impact. According to the WVDE (2007), RTI will have (and has been) implemented in all West Virginia elementary schools.

Marshall University partnered with the state department by having several school psychology graduate students for their thesis research examine RTI implementation and effectiveness of the 11 pilot schools in West Virginia. Research by Haight (2007) demonstrated that there were no significant differences between the frequency of student retention before and after implementation of RTI in the West Virginia pilot schools. However, this research was completed before the full implementation of RTI throughout West Virginia and may not accurately demonstrate the effectiveness of RTI in reducing retention throughout the state. Additional research by Hare (2008) on the pilot schools produced similar results wherein RTI did not significantly decrease the amount of student referrals for special education services. Additionally, Hare (2008) found in studying longitudinal data on referral rates in these pilot schools that the referral rates increased in the time following the research. However, it should be noted that only two of the original

eleven pilot schools participated in this research, further complicating the results and demonstrating the lack of generalizability of the results to other West Virginia schools.

Two studies examined reading instruction. Christy (2008) aimed to examine whether RTI implementation had an effect on teacher skills. The results of the study by Christy (2008) indicated that RTI implementation significantly increased teacher skills and knowledge of reading instruction, as well as increased skills in teaching the core components of reading. Another study by Graham (2007) sought to examine how effective Tier 1 was in providing instruction to help students reach mastery levels of phonemic awareness and phonics in grades K-3. The survey was completed by teachers, principals, project coordinators, and special education directors employed by the 11 RTI pilot program schools in West Virginia (Graham, 2007). Although positive results were found in gaining teacher skills, making a difference in struggling readers, and finding struggling readers sooner, the results demonstrated negative consequences on increasing reading skills and knowledge needed for reading instruction (Graham, 2007). However, Graham (2007) notes that prior research based on teacher perception has shown not to be accurate, therefore leaving the results of this study in question.

A study by Kirby (2006) examined the effects of RTI funding and professional development on staff attitudes at Winfield Elementary School, which was one of the 11 pilot schools. The study examined staff attitudes regarding reading achievement, student potential, time taken to implement the pilot program, and parent involvement (Kirby, 2006). The results of the study demonstrated that extra funding for staff and development made a significant difference in teacher attitudes but not their actual professional development (Kirby, 2006). Observing a model RTI pilot program also

made a significant difference on staff attitudes. The mixture of positive and negative results of such few studies established the need for additional research on RTI in West Virginia.

School psychologists have been vital to the early implementation of this evidenced based practice; in the initial pilot program for the implementation of RTI in West Virginia, the lead program coordinator in 6 of the 11 pilot schools was a school psychologist. Given the growth of RTI in West Virginia, this research was needed to investigate school psychologists in West Virginia and to analyze how RTI implementation has affected their practice across the state. A common theme throughout this review of literature was the lack of current research regarding RTI in West Virginia.

As West Virginia has been a leader in the early implementation of RTI, this research is needed to understand how the state has implemented the program. The current research looked to analyze practicing West Virginia school psychologists' participation within a fully implemented RTI school system. Although Larson and Choi (2010) surveyed school psychologists across the nation regarding their role in RTI, no participants practiced in West Virginia. This study attempted to determine if there are differences in how school psychologists view their role in RTI and how their practice relates to the RTI framework in West Virginia. Currently, RTI has been in place in West Virginia schools for 5 years and is in the process of being evaluated. In particular, this study examined in what ways current West Virginia school psychologist practitioners are involved in RTI throughout West Virginia and whether particular variables could serve as predictors for RTI involvement.

The purpose of this study was to examine what factors serve as predictors of RTI involvement in West Virginia. Do newer school psychologists have a larger role in RTI than more experienced school psychologists? Do smaller workloads predict more RTI involvement? Does a change in job roles predict RTI involvement? This research will examine the relationship between years of experience, schools served, students served, and role changes based on the amount of involvement in RTI within West Virginia schools from the school psychologist perspective.

The null hypothesis states that there will be no relationship between years of experience and RTI involvement. The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. There will be a relationship between years of experience and RTI involvement.
2. School psychologists with fewer schools in which they are employed will be more involved in RTI.
3. School psychologists with a lower population served will be more involved in RTI.
4. School psychologists who had a change in roles will be more involved in RTI.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **METHOD**

In order to complete this research, the researcher examined surveys completed by members of the West Virginia School Psychologists Association (WVSPA). The WVSPA recently created a work group to examine the current role of school psychologists in West Virginia. The work group was charged with developing a model of service delivery for West Virginia school psychologists. The survey was designed to gather data to aid in the development of the model. This study focused on several questions from the survey in order to examine West Virginia school psychologists' role in RTI. Surveys were sent out by e-mail to all members of the WVSPA. The majority of the survey was developed between the fall of 2010 and March of 2011 by a WVSPA work group devoted to the development of the survey. The work group met through executive board meetings and discussed the survey through conference calls, making it a collaborative process to understand the role of the school psychologists in the state of West Virginia.

At the 2011 WVSPA Conference, held in Charleston, West Virginia, school psychologists were encouraged to take the survey. As an incentive, there was a lottery drawing for three or four school psychologists to win a membership in the School Psychology Association (each membership is about a \$50 value). Surveys were also sent out by e-mail to all members of the WVSPA. In May of 2011, the work force sent a reminder to all the school psychologists from the WVSPA list serve, and each was also sent the information of which counties were represented and which were not. The last

respondent answered on October 1, 2011 to the survey. The data were created as an online form and were collected in an online database called “Google Docs.”

### **Duplicate Survey Responses**

First, the work group conducted a duplicate search. The work group identified two duplicates, one from Ritchie County and one from WVDE. The work group removed the earlier records of these two and maintained the final submission as their final record.

Next, the work group recoded some of the answers and standardized some of the responses for recording purposes (e.g., Kanawha County as “KANAWHA,” and Marshall University/COGS/Marshall University School Psychology Program as “MUGC”).

### **Conversion Problem**

There was a problem in inserting the typical work-day hours – for example, when somebody typed in 8/4 (8 *slash* 4), the computer converted it to a random number that was nonmeaningful. The work group fixed the problem by changing it back to the appropriate time.

### **Blank Data**

The work group requested names or a PIN from the school psychologists upon completing the survey, so in case county of employment was left blank and the work group knew where the school psychologist worked, the work group would plug that in to decrease the amount of missing data.

When there were missing data for target variables (for example, with time chart), the work group would code the blanks for 0% (or appropriate) – if it made sense in respect to other responses made by that individual. This happened in 5 records, for an average of two fields per record, where the person’s position and role explained what the answer would be. For example, if you are an IEP Specialist in a county, you are not

practicing direct intervention. Therefore, the missing data for that question regarding the amount of time spent on direct intervention would be coded to 0%.

### **Design**

This study consisted of qualitative and quantitative research components. Convenient sampling was utilized by analyzing surveys completed for the WVSPA work group on RTI in West Virginia schools.

### **Participants**

Participants in this study were 39 school psychology practitioners who are members of the WVSPA. Originally, 65 school psychologists completed the survey. However, only current practitioners were used in the sample, and only respondents who completed all aspects of the survey analyzed in this study, thus reaching the final number of 39 respondents. The survey data completed by the WVSPA members were analyzed using PASW statistical software. The data provided to the researcher contained no identifying information. Therefore, confidentiality was not an issue. Each survey contains responses provided by the practitioners along with a number.

### **Instruments**

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a survey developed by a WVSPA work group. The work group developed the survey to examine the current role of West Virginia school psychologists. This survey included Likert scale items and qualitative items where respondents were asked to write answers in detail. A copy of the survey is available in the appendix.

## **Procedures**

Only surveys completed by respondents who identified themselves as school psychologist practitioners were analyzed in this study. The following questions were taken from the survey to be examined:

- How many years of experience do you have as a school psychologist?
- How many schools do you serve?
- What is the estimated populations of your schools served?
- Please describe your role in the Response to Intervention as both an intervention process and a process for identifying students with specific learning disabilities.
- In what ways has your role as a school psychologist changed in the last 5 years?

## **Data Analysis**

Analysis was completed using the PASW statistical software package. For the current study, the significance level was set at  $p < .05$ . The raw data were analyzed with the exception of the questions regarding a change in the role as a school psychologist and describing their role in Response to Intervention. The data taken from the question regarding a role change were coded into two options for statistical purposes. Data from school psychologists who identified that their role had changed were coded as a 1, whereas data from school psychologists who identified that their role had not changed were coded as a 2.

In regard to the role description question, the data were coded as a 1 (Involved) or 2 (Not Involved). In order for a response to be coded a 1 or 2, the researcher consulted the NASP handout (National Association of School Psychologists, 2006) to identify a consistent method of identifying RTI involvement. The handout identifies 3 areas of

involvement for school psychologists in an RTI framework, those areas being system design, team collaboration, and serving individual students (National Association of School Psychologists, 2006). School psychologists who reported activities in any of the categories received a score of 1 for each category they are involved in, from 0 up to 3 (0, 1, 2, or 3). School psychologists who reported involvement in 0 categories or 1 category were scored a 2 for “Not Involved.” School psychologists who reported involvement with 2 categories or all 3 categories were scored a 1 for “Involved.” For the purposes of this study, a binary logistic regression was used to predict RTI involvement among West Virginia school psychologists.

### **Institutional Review Board**

The current study was examined by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was deemed not human subject research due to the fact that the examiner was provided with the data with all identifying information removed. The letter from the IRB is provided in Appendix B.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine what factors serve as predictors of RTI involvement in West Virginia. A binary logistic regression was utilized to examine whether years of experience as a school psychologist, the number of schools served, the number of students served, and a change of the practitioner's role predict RTI involvement. RTI involvement was determined by coding responses from the survey question "Please describe your role in the Response to Intervention as both an intervention process and a process for identifying students with specific learning disabilities."

Table 1 indicates that 39 of the 58 cases were utilized in this research as 19 cases were removed due to missing data. The logistic regression was utilized to determine which variables if any would predict RTI involvement. As Table 2 indicates, the variables did not significantly predict RTI involvement,  $\chi^2 = .696$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $N = 39$ ,  $p > .05$ . Table 3 displays the accuracy of the model at making predictions. The model only made accurate predictions 56.4% of the time. Table 4 displays the obtained probability for each predictor variable toward RTI involvement, none of which is significant. The formula for the logistic regression takes the  $\beta$  value given in Table 4 and inserts it into the following logarithm:

$$\log \frac{p}{1-p} = .558 + .059RC + -1.48 \times 10^{-5}SS + -.032SC + -.014Y$$

Each predictor variable is therefore added together for each individual and is computed within the formula.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine what factors serve as predictors of RTI involvement in West Virginia. Although it was hypothesized that years of experience as a school psychologist, the number of schools served, the number of students served, and a change of the practitioner's role would be predictors of RTI involvement, these factors were not found to be the case. In analyzing the data, as shown in Table 4, the Beta values of the number of schools served and years of experience show a negative slope.

Although no significance was found from any of these variables, the negative slope does indicate that when years of experience and the number of schools served increases, RTI involvement tends to decrease. However, it should be pointed out that the negative slope does not override the high  $p$  values. It just indicates that experience may be an area of future research. One possible reason that the variables do not predict RTI involvement may be due to WVDE's push to get RTI into the schools. Consequently, all school psychologists are involved regardless of their experience, role in the school, or workload.

To learn more about the role of the school psychologist in RTI, a qualitative examination of the responses to the open ended question of RTI involvement was examined. Responses were categorized into 8 different types of RTI activities in concordance with NASP's (2006) recommendations for involvement. The entire list of reported RTI related activities and their frequency rates are listed below.

- Teams/Committees – 59.6% of respondents
- Reviewing/Interpreting Data – 48.9% of respondents
- Assessments/Evaluations – 40.4% of respondents

- RTI Training/Monitoring – 27.6% of respondents
- Consultation – 25.5% of respondents
- Intervention Plans – 4.3% of respondents
- Observation – 2.1% of respondents
- Communication with Local Agencies – 2.1% of respondents

The majority of respondents are serving on teams and close to half are doing evaluations and assisting with data interpretation. Very few are developing intervention plans, observing students, or communicating with agencies. This lack of involvement is not consistent with the model proposed by Canter (2006) who also advocates involvement in direct interventions. This information provides us with useful information on how West Virginia school psychologists have been involved in RTI and our comparison to a proposed national model (Canter, 2006; NASP, 2006). This information permits us to show that school psychologists are more than test givers, but are also consultants, team and committee members, direct interventionists, and direct mental health providers.

The different activities school psychologists engage in is also obtained by the part of the survey which asks respondents to indicate how they spend their time. Most of the 39 respondents report spending as much as 20-50% of their time in intervention planning and team meetings. Although traditional roles such as assessment are more frequently reported throughout the survey, RTI related services such as serving on teams, committees, and consultation occur infrequently. The reporting of RTI related services shows that attention to the RTI models is perhaps being considered, though it is not as clear how open to role changes practitioners and their school systems are due to the lower frequency rates of RTI related services. Some of the other roles in RTI that were

reported include creating and managing intervention plans, communication with outside agencies, and observations. Many respondents also listed being regarded as experts in policies and procedures within the schools as an unofficial role within RTI.

There were many limitations of this study. The structure of the survey and its questions contributed to problems in interpreting data. Certain questions and potential research variables from the survey were rejected from the current research due to overlapping data. Numerous questions from the survey requested the practitioners to estimate the time spent performing certain roles within their occupation. However, the response choices frequently overlapped in the percentage time spent performing roles. The response choices were 0% of the time, 1-10% of the time, 10-20% of the time, 20-50% of the time, and 50% or more time. Therefore, it is impossible to indicate what true percentage of time practitioners perform certain tasks. For example, if a school psychologist indicates he or she spends 50% or more time on consultation, there is no way to distinguish what percentage of time the school psychologist truly means due to the structure of the question. By responding “50% or more time,” the school psychologist could mean any percentage of time from 50% to 100%.

In examining the questions even further, the wording of many questions is vague. For instance, one question involved checking the percentage of time spent in consultation. The question does not directly define what they mean by consultation. Does this mean consultation between practitioners and parents? Does it mean consulting between faculty members in an RTI related manner? Does it simply mean time spent explaining reports in eligibility meetings? The wording of the questions on the survey is

vague and should be clearly defined in order to examine what consultation and other services truly mean.

The overlapping percentages make it impossible to determine a true allotment of time spent on a given task. Time allotment data could have proven very useful to determine the percentage of time spent on RTI related activities. Future research inquiring about time spent on RTI related activities might reconsider the structure of the questions in order to determine how a school psychologist spends 100% of his or her time. The WVSPA survey was designed to create a model of service delivery for West Virginia school psychologists. The survey did not aim to specifically analyze RTI involvement. This study used the data from the survey in an attempt to analyze West Virginia school psychologists' involvement in RTI. To better answer the question of RTI involvement, a new survey with clearly defined questions regarding RTI and RTI related activities would need to be developed.

In conclusion, years of experience as a school psychologist, number of schools served, number of students served, and a change in the practitioners' role does not significantly predict RTI involvement for West Virginia school psychologists. Future studies need to examine further what does predict school psychologists' participation in RTI. However, research on RTI in schools is still relatively new, and further analysis should be considered. This study is just a small step forward in understanding the effectiveness of RTI and the role of school psychologists in the implementation of RTI in the state of West Virginia.

## Appendix A

# West Virginia School Psychologist Survey January 2011

The West Virginia School Psychologist Association (WVSPA) is conducting a survey in order to determine the role and function of school psychologists in West Virginia. Additionally, WVSPA would also like to collect basic demographic information including the average salary, contract length and experience of school psychologists in West Virginia. The information you provide will be reported collectively to the WVSPA membership and no personal identifying information will be shared. Your input may also be used in a best practice document detailing the role of the school psychologists in our state. Please take a few minutes to respond to this survey. It is important that we receive input from all school psychologists across the state to fully represent the actual practice of school psychologists in West Virginia.

**\* Required**

What is your name? **\*** If you prefer to remain anonymous, please submit a unique pin number for the prize drawings.

### Demographic Information

What is your gender? **\***



Female



Male

What is your age? **\***

What is the name of the School Psychology Program you attended? **\***

What is your race/ethnicity? **\***



Asian



Black/African American



Native American/Alaskan



Hispanic



Multiracial (Two or more races)



Pacific Islander



White (not Hispanic)

What is your highest degree level in School Psychology? **\***

- Masters
- Specialist
- Doctorate
- Other:

What is your job title? \*

- School psychologist practitioner
- School psychology intern
- Special education coordinator, specialist or administrator
- Faculty or trainer
- Other:

How many years of experience do you have as a School Psychologist? \*

What is your current salary as a School Psychologist? \*

If you are a licensed School Psychologist, please indicate level of licensure. \*

- Level I
- Level II
- I am currently working toward obtaining licensure.
- I am not a licensed School Psychologist nor actively working toward icensure.

Please list any careers you had prior to becoming a school psychologist (e.g., teacher/educator,

business professional.) \*

### Information about You as a School Psychologist

What is your county(ies) or agency of employment (salaried and/or contracted)?

What is your length of contract? Example 1: 200 days for a salaried position; Example 2: 40 days per year for a contracted or 1099 position

Describe your work hours (e.g., 8 AM to 4 PM)

On average, how many hours do you spend each week working on School Psychologists responsibilities (e.g., report writing) beyond your regular paid work hours?

How many schools do you serve?

What is the estimated populations of your schools served?

Do you receive extra duty contracts to provide psychological services during the summer?

- Yes, every summer
- Yes, sometimes
- No, never
- School year contract already includes summer hours

If applicable, please name any other extra duty contracts you receive. Example; after school tutoring, coaching, counseling and evaluations

Please check all services you provide as a School Psychologist and estimate the percentage of time spent performing each role.

	0% of time	1-10% of time	10-20% of time	20-50% of time	50% or more time
Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Report writing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intervention planning and team meetings (e.g., grade level, student assistance, and behavior intervention team meetings)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Eligibility/ IEP / and 504 meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Program evaluation / research	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Consultation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Direct academic or social skill intervention (individual or group)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	0% of time	1-10% of time	10-20% of time	20-50% of time	50% or more time
Counseling (individual or group)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Crisis Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
University College Teacher or Trainer	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please describe your role in the Response to Intervention as both an intervention process and a process for identifying students with specific learning disabilities.

Please describe your role in providing school based mental health services.

What services do you provide as a School Psychologist in your district that no other school staff

provides.

In what way has your role as a School Psychologist changed in the last five years? If you have less than 5 years experience, please skip this question.

Describe the major advantages of being a School Psychologist in your district. Include mention of any variables or job roles within your district that heighten job satisfaction.

Describe the major obstacles of being a School Psychologist in your district(s).

What factors would cause you to leave your current job to move to a neighboring county or state?

- More pay
- Better work environment
- Family considerations
- More desirable location
- Other:

### Information about Other School Psychologists in your District

Please do not include clinical psychologists or counselors in your answers.

How many salaried School Psychologists (including yourself if applicable) does your county employ?

(Count those with benefits only)

How many contracted School Psychologists (including yourself if applicable) does your county hire?

(1099 employees or those without fringe benefits who are paid per diem or case)

How many of these School Psychologists (including yourself if applicable) primarily serve students with disabilities or students suspected of disabilities?

What is the starting salary for a School Psychologist in your county?

If applicable, how much of a supplement does your county pay School Psychologists? (Do not include

supplement for NCSP)

How many school psychologists in your county (including yourself if applicable) are Nationally Certified?

Do school psychologists in your county get additional county pay for the National Certification (NCSP)?

 Yes  No

If you receive a supplement or additional pay for NCSP, please list the amount.

## WVPSA Roles and Responsibilities

Please rate the importance of the items in terms of issue WVPSA should be addressing.

	Not at All Important - Do not want WVPSA to address	2	3	4	Very Important - WVPSA should be spending considerable time focusing on this issue.
Development of a work group for those seeking national certification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establishing or maintaining competitive salaries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defining the role of WV School Psychologists.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Obtaining the same economic benefits as teachers such as early declaration of retirement and national certification pay parity with teachers and other school personnel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Not at All Important - Do not want WVPSA to address	2	3	4	Very Important - WVPSA should be spending considerable time focusing on this issue.
Right to practice legislative issues – The movement of APA/WVPA to limit certified school psychologists practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislative activism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment and retention of school psychologists in WV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of professional development to school psychologists to improve services to children and youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide mentoring and support for new and less experienced school psychology practitioners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What information do you wish to receive on the WVPSA listserv?

	No, I do not wish to receive this information on the listserv.	I don't mind receiving or not receiving this information on the listserv.	Yes, I want to receive this information on the listserv.
Access to participate in research studies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Announcements regarding professional development opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislative announcements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WVSPA meetings/conference notices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best practices as a School Psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing questions and dilemmas from other School Psychologists across WV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix B



Office of Research Integrity

May 4, 2012

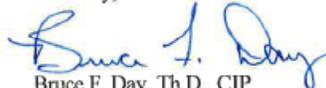
Sandra Stroebel, Ph.D.  
Professor  
School Psychology Department  
Marshall University Graduate College

Dear Dr. Stroebel:

This letter is in response to the submitted abstract for your project titled "WVSPA Survey regarding School Psychologist Roles." After assessing the abstract it has been deemed not to be human subject research and therefore exempt from oversight of the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) has set forth the criteria utilized in making this determination. Since the information in this study consists solely of deidentified archival data provided by West Virginia School Psychology Association (WVSPA) it is not human subject research and therefore not subject to Common Rule oversight. If there are any changes to the abstract you provided then you will need to resubmit that information for review and determination.

I appreciate your willingness to submit the abstract for determination. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding future protocols that may require IRB review.

Sincerely,



Bruce F. Day, Th.D., CIP  
Director  
Office of Research Integrity

## References

- Canter, A. (2006, February). Problem solving and rti: New roles for school psychologists. *Communiqué*, 34, (5), insert. Retrieved from <http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/mocq345rti.aspx>
- Christy, J. (2008). *Teacher skill and response to intervention in West Virginia pilot schools* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/etd/default.asp>
- Graham, S.L. (2007). *Effective reading instruction in a response to intervention program evaluation* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/etd/default.asp>
- Hare, C. (2008). *The Effects of response to intervention on referral rates for special education services* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/etd/default.asp>
- Haight, J. D. (2007). *Response to intervention and effects on retention* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/etd/default.asp>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).
- Justice, L. M. (2006). Evidence-based practice, response to intervention, and the prevention of reading difficulties. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 37, 284-297. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2006/033)
- Kirby, A. (2006). *Staff attitude change in a response to intervention program evaluation* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/etd.default.asp>

- Klotz, M. B., & Canter, A. (2007). Response to intervention (rti): A primer for parents. Retrieved from <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/revisedPDFs/rtiprimer.pdf>
- Larson, J. P., & Choi, H. S. (2010) The effect of university training and educational legislation on the role and function of school psychologists. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 26*(2), 97-114. doi:10.1080/15377900903433336
- Maleyko, G., & Gawlik, M. A. (2011). No child left behind: What we know and what we need to know. *Education, 131*(3), 600-624. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/>
- Murawski, W. W., & Hughes, C. E. (2009). Response to intervention, collaboration, and co-teaching: A logical combination for successful systemic change. *Preventing School Failure, 53*(4), 267-277. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/>
- National Association of School Psychologists (2006). The role of the school psychologist in the rti process. Retrieved from [http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/RTIrole\\_NASP.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/RTIrole_NASP.pdf)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 6319 (2008)
- Reschly, D. J. (2008). School psychology paradigm and beyond. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 3 – 15). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Reynolds, C. R., & Shaywitz, S. E. (2009). Response to intervention: Ready or not? Or, from wait to-fail to watch-them-fail. *School Psychology Quarterly, 24*(2), 130-145. doi:10.1037/a016158

Russo, C. J., Osborne, A. G., & Borreca, E. (2005). The 2004 re-authorization of the individuals with disabilities education act. *Education & the Law*, 17(3), 111-117.

doi:10.1080/09539960500334103

Sullivan, A. L., & Long, L. (2010). Examining the changing landscape of school psychology practice: A survey of school-based practitioners regarding response to intervention. *Psychology in the Schools*, 47(10), 1059-1070.

doi:10.1002/pits.20524

West Virginia Department of Education (2007, October 30). Establishing Response to Intervention: Scaling Up in West Virginia. In *West Virginia Department of Education*. Retrieved June 18, 2011, from

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/phasesofimplementationchart11-07.pdf>

Table 1

**Logistic Regression**

**Case Processing Summary**

Unweighted Cases <sup>a</sup>	N	Percent
Selected Cases		
Included in Analysis	39	67.2
Missing Cases	19	32.8
Total	58	100.0
Unselected Cases	0	.0
Total	58	100.0

a. If weight is in effect, see classification table for the total number of cases.

Table 2

**Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients**

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	.696	4	.952
	Block	.696	4	.952
	Model	.696	4	.952

Table 3

**Classification Table<sup>a</sup>**

Observed			Predicted		
			RTI Involvement		Percentage Correct
			Not RTI Involved	RTI Involved	
Step	RTI Involvement	Not RTI Involved	3	15	16.7
1		RTI Involved	2	19	90.5
		Overall Percentage			56.4

a. The cut value is .500

Table 4

**Variables in the Equation**

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup> YearsExp	-.014	.036	.146	1	.702	.986
SchoolServd	-.032	.123	.069	1	.792	.968
StdntsServd	.000	.000	.002	1	.963	1.000
RoleChange(1)	.059	.796	.005	1	.941	1.061
Constant	.558	.793	.496	1	.481	1.748

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: YearsExp, SchoolServd, StdntsServd, RoleChange.