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# Response to Intervention and SLD Identification

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The IDEA Partnership wishes to acknowledge the work of Lou Danielson, Ph.D., Director, Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs; Dr. Daryl Mellard, Director, National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD), University of Kansas; and Dr. Douglas Fuchs, Director, National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD), Vanderbilt University.

Slides displaying the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD) logo contain original text presented by Lou Danielson on June 21, 2006 to the members of the IDEA Partnership Focus Group and/or Daryl Mellard on April 1, 2005 to the members of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

-and-

We are deeply grateful for being allowed to adapt the original presentations in order to provide additional access to all education stakeholders.

# Session Overview

- RTI Process
  - What is it?
  - What might it look like in practice?
- SLD Identification
  - What are the current issues/problems?
  - What data can RTI yield that will assist in SLD determination?
- Resources for further consideration

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# RTI Process



What is it?

# RTI is...

the practice of providing high-quality  
instruction/intervention matched to student needs  
*and*  
using learning rate over time  
and level of performance  
*to*  
inform educational decisions

# What do we mean by RTI?

1. RTI has two goals: prevent academic problems and determine students with LD.
2. 2 or more tiers of increasingly intense interventions.
3. Use a problem solving model or standardized treatment protocol for intervention tiers.
4. Implementation of a differentiated curriculum with different instructional methods.
5. Varied duration, frequency, and time of interventions, and
6. Explicit decision rules for judging learners' progress.

# Goals of RTI

- Prevention of academic/behavior problems
  - Attend to skill gaps early
  - Provide interventions/instruction early
  - Close skill gaps to prevent failure
- Determination of eligibility as a student with a specific learning disability
  - Pattern of inadequate response to interventions may result in referral to special education
  - Student intervention response data are considered for SLD eligibility

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# RTI Process

What might it look like  
in practice?

# What does RTI

## implementation look like?

1. Students receive high quality, research-based instruction by qualified staff in their general education setting.
2. General education instructors and staff assume an active role in students' assessment in that curriculum.
3. School staff conduct universal screening of (a) academics and (b) behavior.
4. School staff implement specific, research-based interventions to address the student's difficulties.

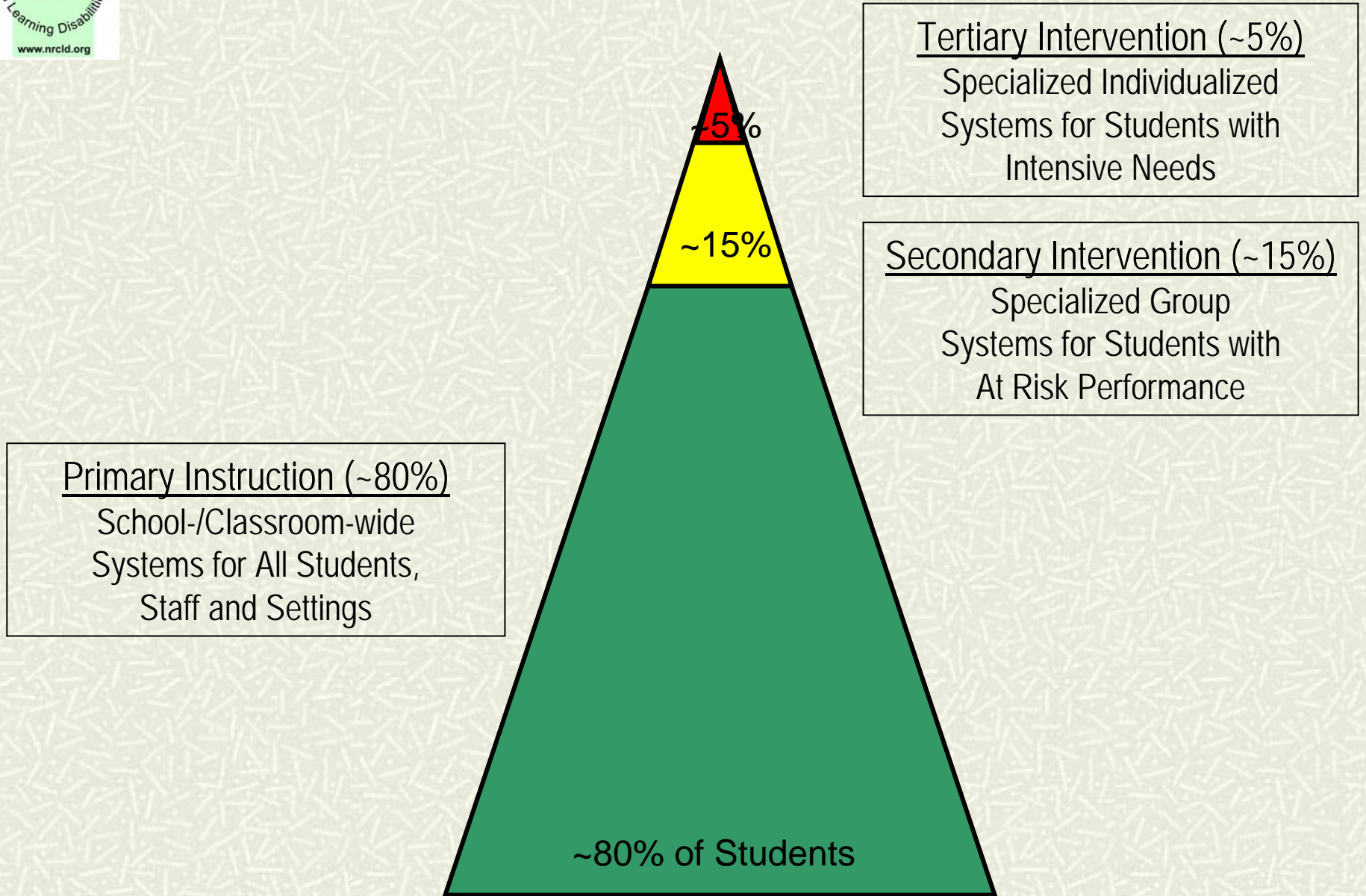
# Other features of RTI

5. Continuous progress monitoring of student performance occurs (weekly or biweekly).
6. School staff use progress-monitoring data and decision rules to determine interventions' effectiveness and needed modifications.
7. Systematic assessment of the fidelity or integrity with which instruction and interventions are implemented.

# *Intervention Levels*

- Two or more tiers
- Tiers include increasing levels of intensity of interventions
  - Primary Instruction -- differentiated curriculum and instruction for all students
  - Secondary Interventions -- Targeted interventions for students at-risk
  - Tertiary Interventions -- Strategic/Intense interventions for students with intensive needs

# Continuum of School-Wide Instruction



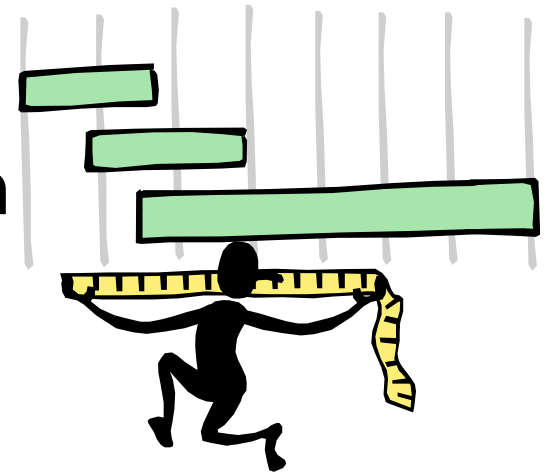
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# *Primary Instruction*

- *Expectation* = 80% or more of students successful with general education curriculum and instruction
- *Assessment* = Universal screenings for academics and social/emotional growth (behaviors)
- *Intervention* = Through differentiated instructional practices
- *Roles and responsibilities* = primarily the general education teacher

# Which students may have a learning gap?

- Low income
- Culturally diverse
- English language learners
- Special education
- Disengaged
- Male or female
- Career and technical education
- Gifted education

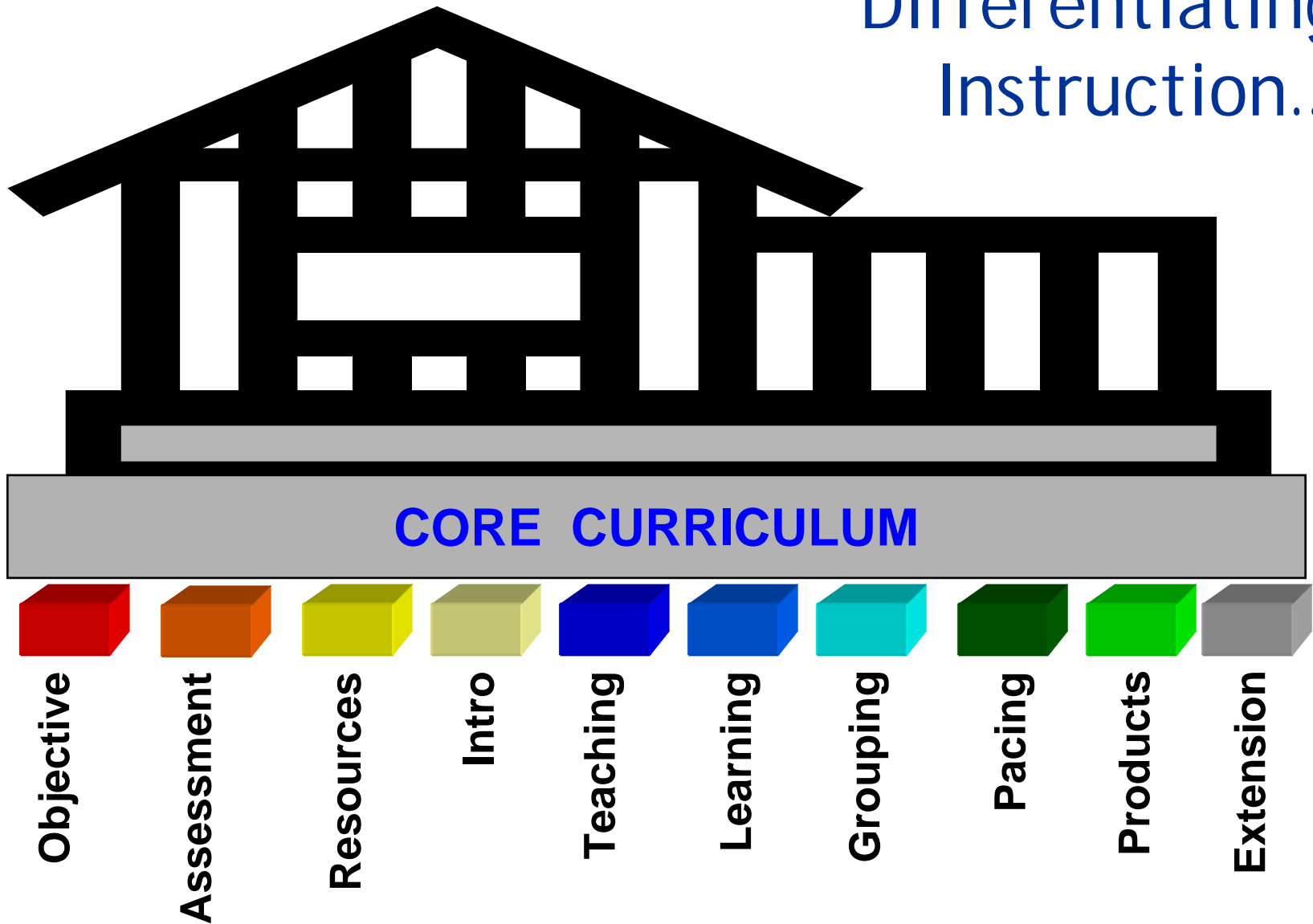


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# Differentiated Instruction

- Meeting diverse needs of diverse student population
- Differentiating based on content and student strengths and needs
- Choosing curriculum components to differentiate
  - Within the core curriculum
  - Consistent with state learning standards

# Differentiating Instruction...



# *Secondary Intervention*

- *Expectation* = 15% of students may be at risk and in need of targeted interventions
- *Assessment* = progress monitoring of student response to specific intervention
- *Intervention* = standard protocol treatment intervention as available from the research; evidence-based intervention as available in the literature
- *Roles and responsibilities* = variety of personnel as determined at the local site

# Standard Treatment Protocol Approach To Responsive-to-Intervention

- The standard treatment is for the student to receive a validated, intense intervention
- The bad news is that all students receive the same intervention
- The good news is that the interventions are well-specified, sequenced with clear outcomes
- The interventions are more likely to be delivered with fidelity; training is consistent
- Increases the consistency of services; easy to check for implementation

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# What types of interventions?

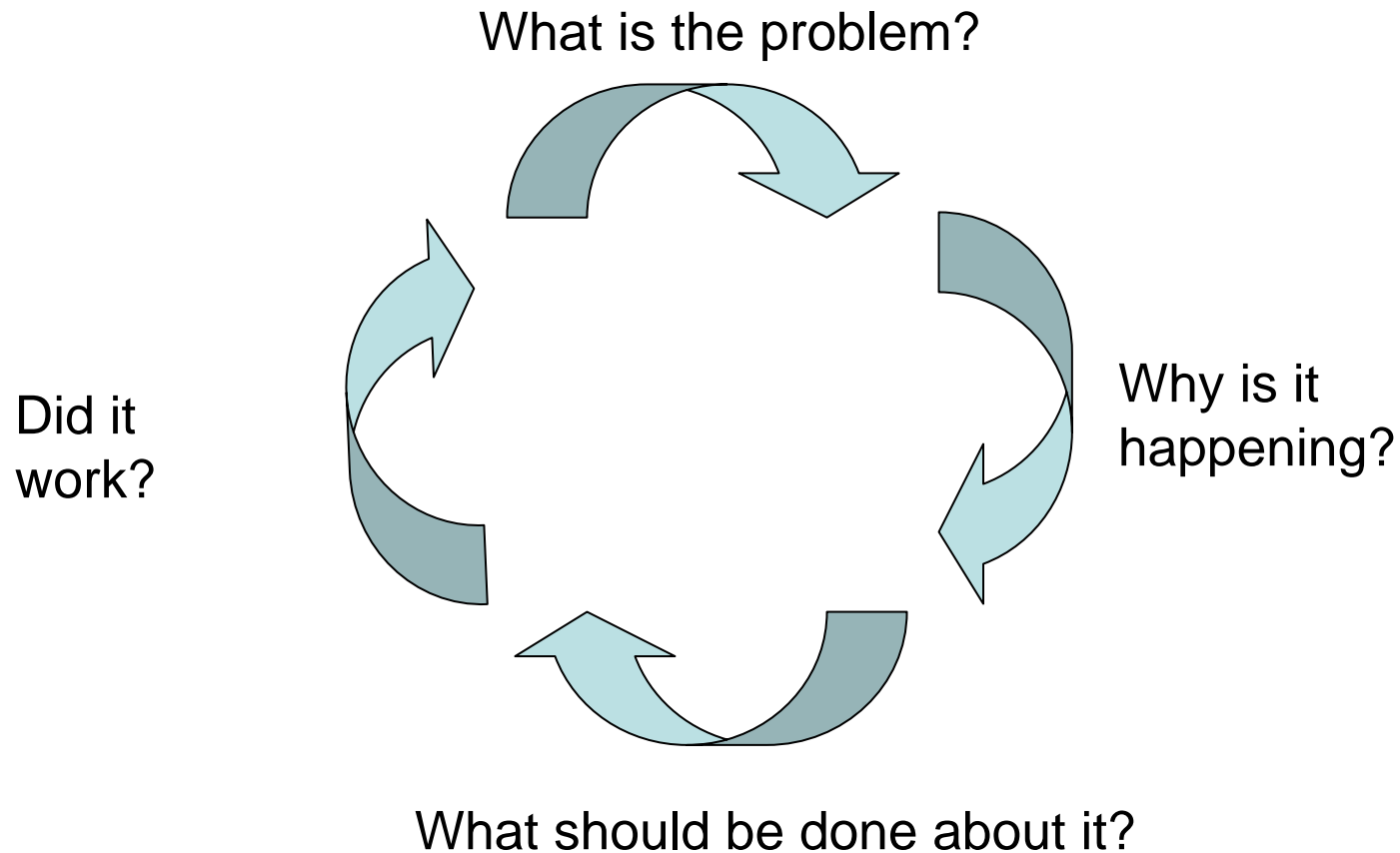
1. Standard Treatment Protocol Interventions
  - From scientific-based education research
2. Evidence-based Interventions
  - From education research
3. Experiential-based Interventions
  - From best practice with like students

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# *Tertiary Intervention*

- *Expectation* = 5% of students may be at significant risk and in need of intense interventions
- *Assessment* = progress monitoring of student response to specific intervention
- *Intervention* = standard protocol treatment intervention as available from the research; evidence-based intervention as available in the literature; unique intervention based on teacher expertise
- *Roles and responsibilities* = variety of personnel as determined at the local site

# Problem-Solving Method



# Determining interventions

- Use of problem-solving methodology
  - Define problem
  - Brainstorm solutions
  - Choose intervention with greatest potential for student success
    - Standard treatment protocol intervention
    - Evidence-based intervention
  - Monitor and assess intervention outcomes

# Explicit decision rules

- Necessary for determining expected response or inadequate response to intervention
- Considering
  - Expected level of achievement of peer group
  - Target for this student
  - Movement toward the target
  - Trajectory of improvement, or lack thereof

# Program/Process Evaluation

- Systematic and ongoing
- Assess integrity/fidelity of implementation of interventions
- Assess integrity of implementation of overall process
  - High quality, research-based instruction
  - Screening and progress monitoring
  - Data analysis
  - Problem-solving
  - Data-driven decision-making

# Advantages of RTI Approach

- Provides instructional assistance in a timely fashion (e.g., NOT a wait-to-fail model)
- Helps ensure a student's poor academic performance is not due to poor instruction or inappropriate curriculum
- Informs teacher and improves instruction because assessment data are collected and closely linked to interventions

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# SLD Identification

What are the current  
issues/concerns?

# Identification of SLD

- Current “wait to fail” model
- Misidentification
- Disproportionality



# Researcher Roundtable

## on Specific Learning Disabilities

- SLD is a valid concept with converging evidence across indicators and methodologies
- SLD are disorders of learning and cognition intrinsic to the individual(s)
- Each disorder significantly affects a relatively narrow range of academic and performance outcomes
- SLD may occur in combination with other disabling conditions, but are not due primarily to other conditions

# Researcher Roundtable on Response to Intervention

- There should be alternate ways to identify SLD
- Response to quality intervention is the most promising method of alternate identification
  - Can promote effective practices in schools
  - Can help to close the gap between identification and treatment
- RTI should be based on problem solving models that use progress monitoring to gauge the intensity of intervention in relation to the student's response to intervention

# SLD Determination and IDEA 2004

(P.L. 108-446)

New language in the law:

“...a local education agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures...”

Sec. 614(b)6B [emphasis added]

In the special education research literature, the process mentioned in this language is generally considered as referring to RTI.

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# RTI as part of SLD Identification

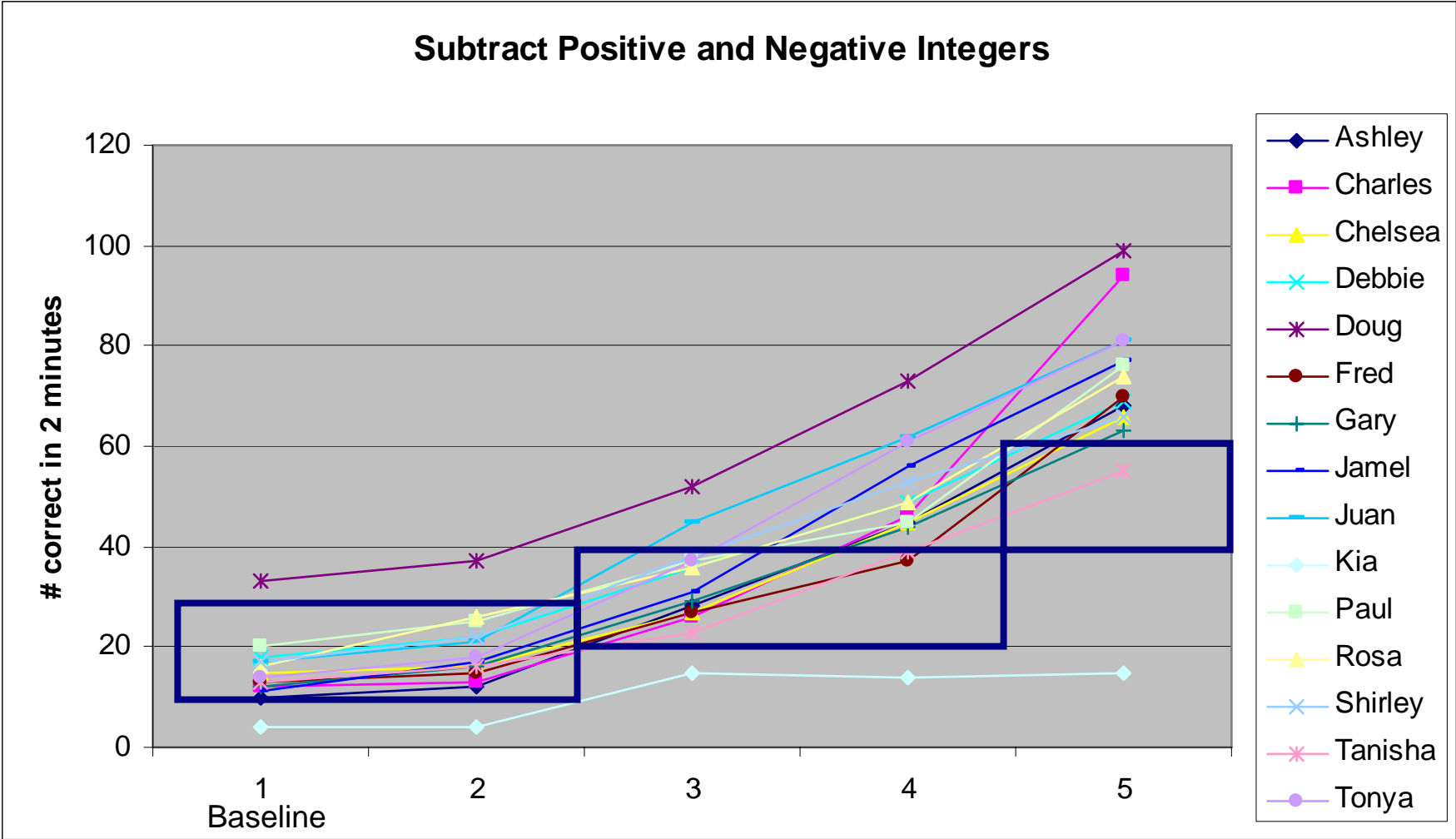
What data can RTI yield  
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# *Explicit decision rules*

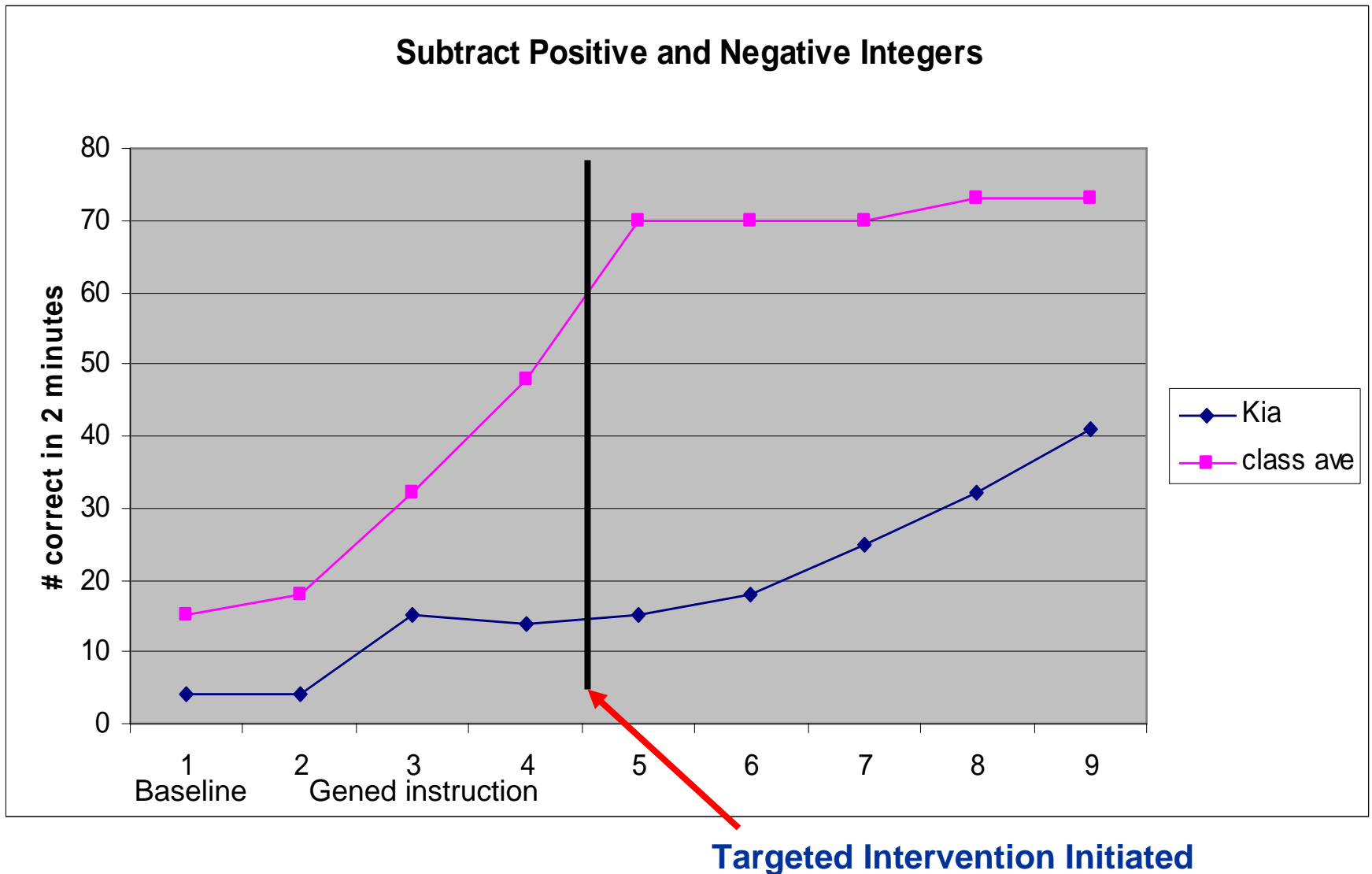
- Necessary for determining expected response or inadequate response to intervention
- Considering
  - Expected level of achievement of peer group
  - Target for this student
  - Movement toward the target
  - Trajectory of improvement, or lack thereof

# Classroom teacher screening for a specific indicator...



Source: Sharon R Schultz, from a presentation/facilitated dialogue entitled *RTI: Schoolwide Transformation* (Spring 2007)

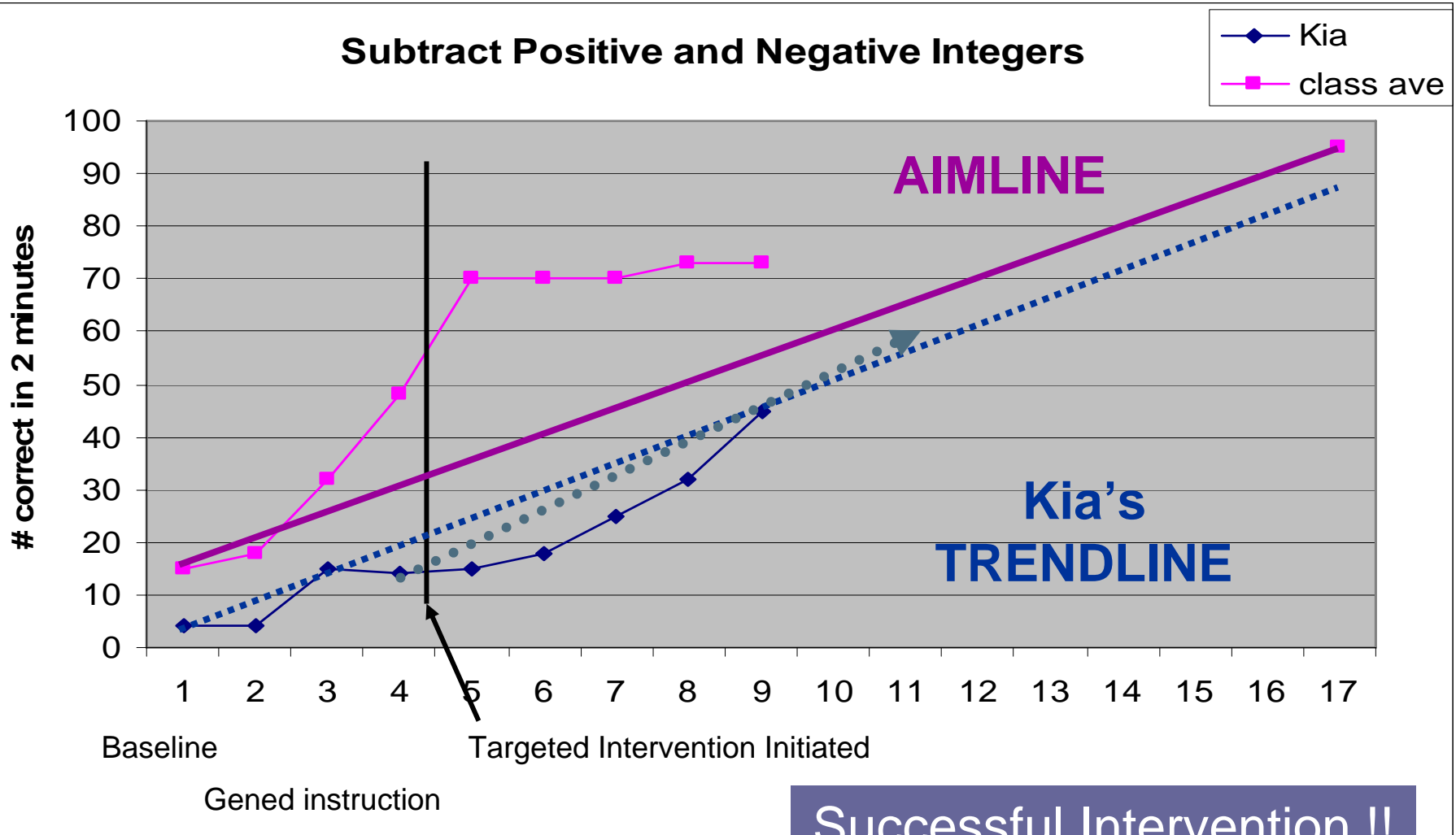
# Progress Monitoring for a specific intervention...



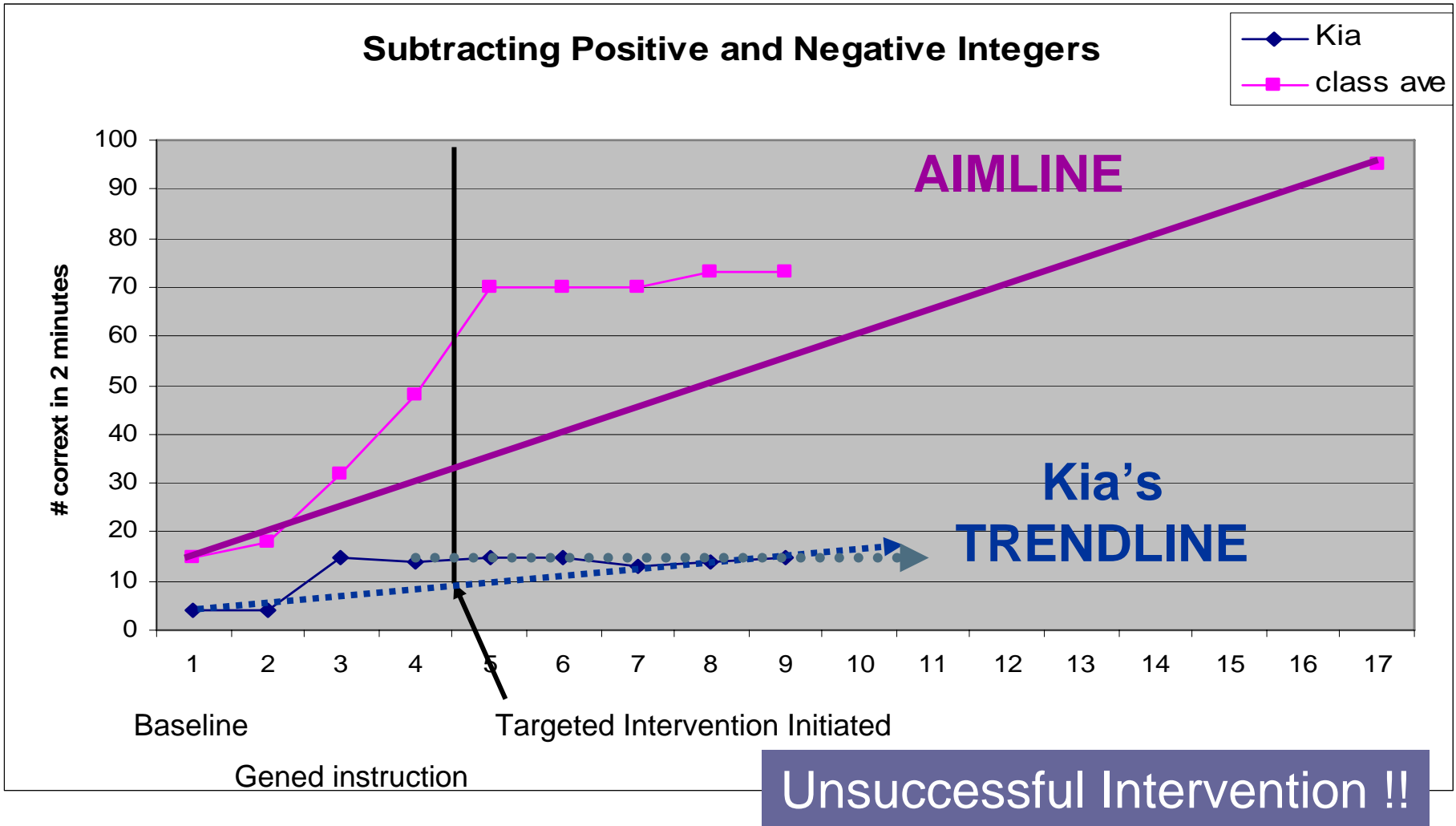
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# Progress Monitoring for a specific intervention...

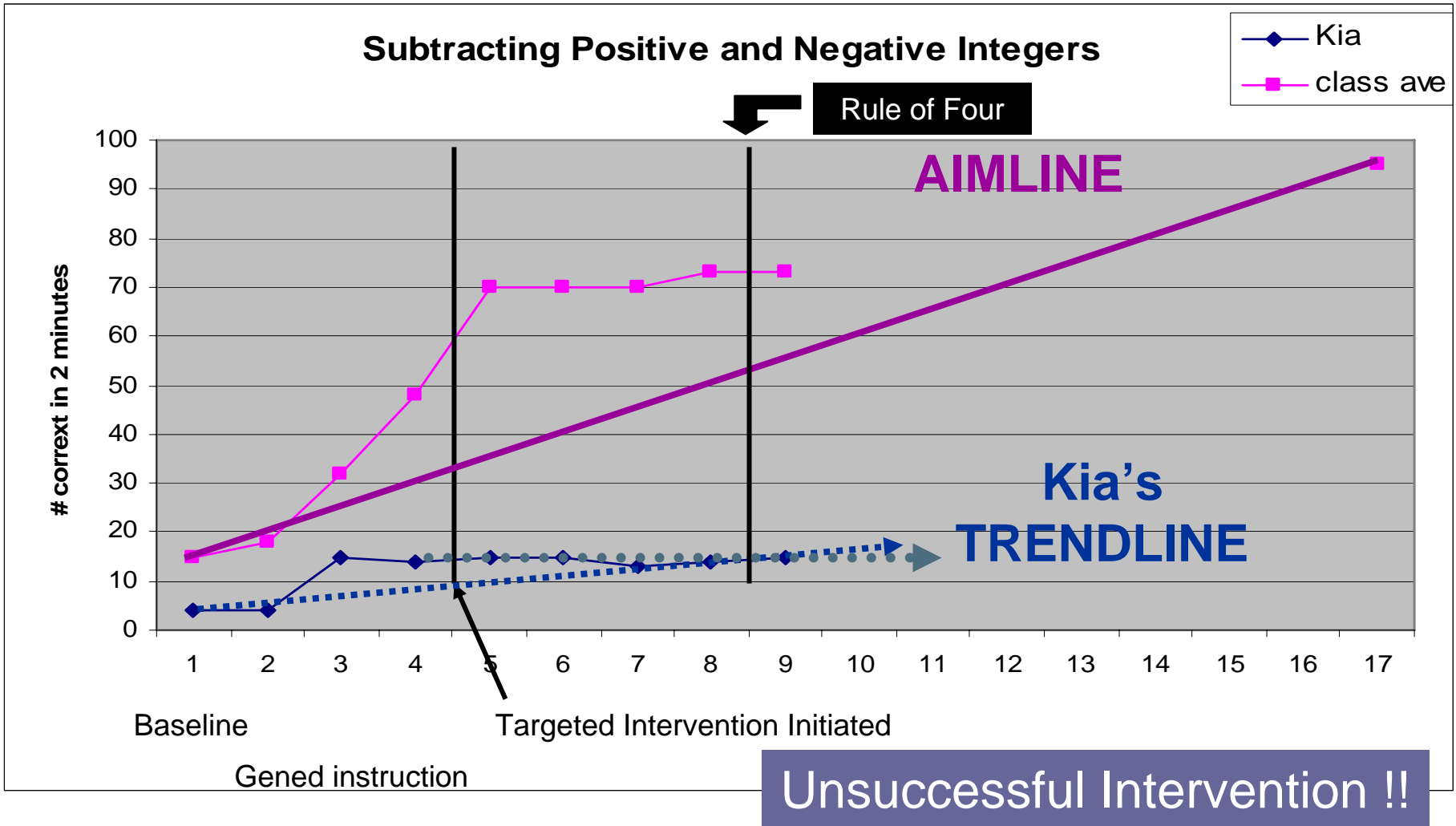
## Subtract Positive and Negative Integers



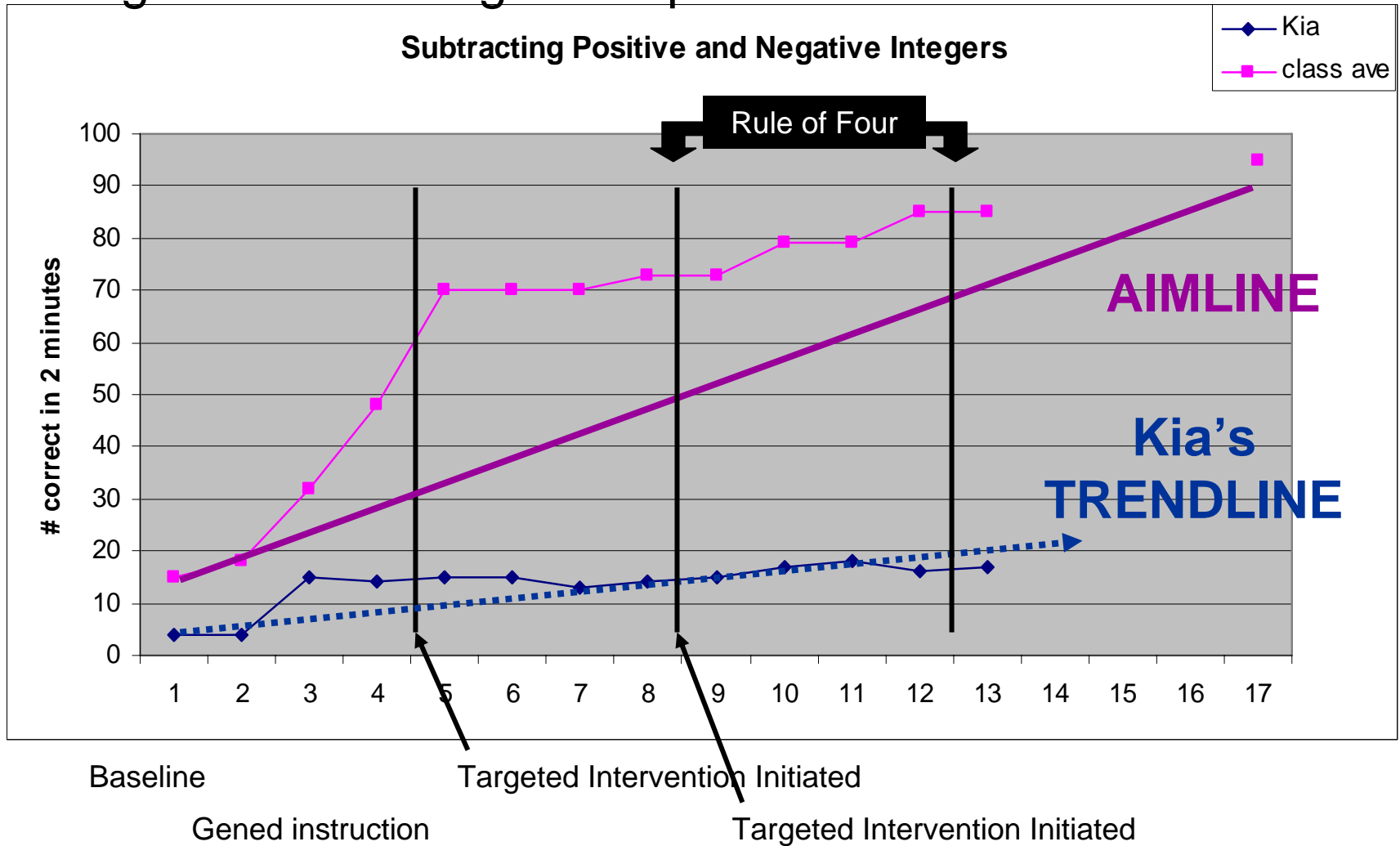
# Progress Monitoring for a specific intervention...



# Progress Monitoring for a specific intervention...



# Progress Monitoring for a specific intervention...



Another targeted intervention -or- intense intervention?

# Monitoring progress...

- How often will skill probes be administered?
- How many probes will be administered before determining to continue, fade, or change a particular intervention?
- What is a pattern of inadequate response?
  - How many different interventions at each tier?
  - How much time in each tier?



# RTI Symposium

- Participants included advocates, instructional staff, researchers, and state-level education officials
- Speakers shared knowledge / expertise, organized around **six questions** related to RTI implementation in both school districts and research sites
- Symposium materials (e.g., papers, PowerPoint presentations, video highlights) are available on our website: [www.nrclid.org](http://www.nrclid.org)

# Regional Resource Centers

[www.rrfcnetwork.org](http://www.rrfcnetwork.org)

- **Federal Resource Center**

- Michele Rovins, Director

- Region 1: **Northeast**

- Kristin Reedy, Director

- Region 2: **Mid-South**

- Kenneth Warlick, Director

- Region 3: **Southeast**

- Elizabeth Beale, Director

- Region 4: **North Central**

- Michael Sharpe, Director

- Region 5: **Mountain Plains**

- John Copenhaver, Director

- Region 6: **Western**

- Caroline Moore, Director

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# For More Information: IDEA Partnership's RTI Initiative

Website: [www.ideapartnership.org](http://www.ideapartnership.org)

- A Partnership Collection on RTI
- Many Journals, Many Voices
- Results for Kids: Resources



Reflections!



Questions?



Discussion.

