

Special Education Intervention Courses

Special Education and Student Support	Joey Hassell, Assistant Commissioner, Joey.Hassell@tn.gov
Course Code(s)	TBD
Prerequisite(s)	Individual Education Program (IEP)
Grade Level	K-8, 9-12
Credits	For grades 9-12, ½ credit
Programs of Study and Sequence	This is an elective course. It can be part of an Academic Intervention focus area of study.
Teacher Endorsement	Special education teacher or special education interventionist endorsement
Additional Information:	This course is specifically designed to provide intervention aligned to student area of deficit as indicated in the Individual Education Program (IEP)

Course Description

The special education intervention course is designed to provide systematic, evidence based interventions aligned to a student’s specific area of need in addition to grade level content standards instruction. Students are eligible for this course if they have met the criteria for an educational disability, are served through an Individualized Education program (IEP) and have specific measureable annual goals that are based on their exceptional academic present levels of educational performance. The intent of the course is to provide time for students to receive the most intensive interventions aligned to their specific area of need. This course will include intensive intervention, ongoing progress monitoring, data based decision making and ongoing fidelity monitoring of intervention implementation. The intervention course and interventions must have the oversight of a special education teacher.

Students who qualify for special education intervention will be assigned intervention and services by their **Individualized Education Program (IEP) team**. Special education services will be the most intensive level of intervention. The student will remain in the core instruction (Tier I) and will have access to intervention within the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible. The same **problem solving** approach used in the general education RTI² process will be used in special education (RTI² 2013). Furthermore, interventions will be tailored to the student in the area of identified area of deficit, and progress toward their IEP goals will be monitored weekly/bi-weekly or as often as their non-disabled peers. When students fail to respond to intervention as a result of the provision of special education, the student’s intervention should be changed.

The size of the class should remain smaller to increase intensity of instruction. Research supports small groups for interventions.

9-12	1:12
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Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is completed for all students that are receiving interventions. In progress monitoring, short screening tools are used to evaluate a student's progress in specific areas. Progress monitoring can take place weekly or bi-weekly depending on the districts/schools screening cycle. Progress monitoring must be aligned to the student's area of deficit and will be completed to help inform instructional decisions for any students receiving intervention through the course.

The assessment tools selected for progress monitoring should be specific to the skill(s) being measured. CBMs are a frequently used tool for progress monitoring academic interventions. For example, in reading, an appropriate progress monitoring tool would target the specific essential element(s) of reading with which an individual student is having difficulty, such as **phonemic awareness**, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and/or comprehension. The same process would be followed for any deficit area of need.

Academic Progress Monitoring may include:

- **Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) probes**,
- Assessments from **intervention materials/kits** (requirements: national percentiles, allow for repeated measures, sensitive to change, and specific to an area of deficit including basic reading skills), reading fluency, **reading comprehension**, mathematics calculation, mathematics **problem solving** and written expression). In addition, it must plot or give information so that rate of improvement (ROI) can be transferred to graph form, or
- Computer-based assessments (Requirements: national percentiles, allow for repeated measures, sensitive to change, and specific to an area of deficit including basic reading skill(s), reading fluency, **reading comprehension**, mathematics calculation, mathematics **problem solving** and written expression). In addition, it must plot or give information so that **rate of improvements** (ROI) can be transferred to graph form.

Progress monitoring for students receiving special education intervention will take place at a **frequency** of at least every other week or as often as non-disabled peers in the district or school. **Highly-trained personnel** should administer the **progress monitoring probes**. General and special education teachers together should continuously analyze the **progress monitoring** data.

Progress monitoring procedures are outlined in Tennessee's Special Education Framework component 7.1, please review for additional information.

Data Based Decision Making

When making decisions regarding special education interventions, the team will consider all current data and progress monitoring. Data will be used to determine movement within and out of the most intensive interventions. Students that are making sufficient progress will remain at the level of support required to be successful. If it is determined that the student is making insufficient progress, then a different intervention may be considered based on lack of response. Interventions may be changed during the time students are enrolled in this course. Progress monitoring and data based decision making is necessary to determine if a change of intervention is necessary.

Fidelity Checks

Interventions and Fidelity Monitoring

Fidelity is the **accuracy** or extent to which special education intervention materials and other curricula are used as intended by the author/publisher. **Fidelity monitoring** is the **systematic** monitoring by a responsible instructional leader (e.g. principal, instructional coach) to determine the extent to which the delivery of an intervention adheres to the protocols or program models as originally developed. In special education intervention, **fidelity monitoring** will focus on the intervention specific to each student and will use reliable and valid measures.

LEAs must have a process for monitoring **fidelity**. This process must include a description of who is responsible for **fidelity monitoring** and how often **fidelity** in special education intervention will be monitored. Student attendance and documented reasons for absence should be taken during interventions.

The **fidelity** of implementation per academic intervention will be assessed throughout the process; the minimum requirement is the same amount as indicated for non-disabled peers.

Tier III required academic fidelity checks according to the RTI² Framework:

- 3 checks in Tier II where 2 must be a direct observation
- 5 checks in Tier III where 3 must be direct observations and two must be a review of implementation data (i.e., student attendance, lesson plans, **and progress monitoring** results).

Ongoing **fidelity** documentation of intervention should include:

- interventions used
- evidence of implementation at 80 percent or greater
- student attendance
- **progress monitoring** results
- other anecdotal information that might account for the student's progress or a lack thereof.

Guidelines for implementing interventions within the intervention course are outlined in Component 6.3 of Tennessee's Special Education framework.