

## Honing Tier 3 Services & Supports: A Year in Review

Halifax Area School District  
Halifax Elementary  
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### Background

- In October 2014, our elementary building was invited to participate in PaTTAN's Tier 3 Problem-Solving Series.
- Team Members:
  - One teacher from 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Learning Support teacher
  - Two Title I Reading Teachers
  - Speech Pathologist
  - School Psychologist
  - Building Principal
- As part of this problem-solving series, we chose a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student for a case study examining tiered support.
- At the beginning of this process, our building was only implementing Tier 1 Instruction & Tier 2 Interventions.

## Our Case Study

### Profile of Student: Zoe

- In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade during the case study, 9 years old
- Has a twin brother in the same class
- Repeated Kindergarten
- 2012-2013 Failed hearing test & had surgery to remove tonsils & put tubes in her ears.
- Attention issues – Zoe has trouble staying focused in a whole-class & small-group setting. She can stay focused with one-on-one support.
- Social delays – Zoe is shy around adults. She will often get her twin brother to ask for things for her. Zoe often points to things or makes noises instead of using words to ask for things or help.

## Initial Assessments & Tier 2 Intervention

- Assessments:
  - September 2014: Dibels NWF & ORF
  - September 2014: A to Z Running Record
  - October 2014: Words Their Way Spelling Inventory
- Tier 2 Services:
  - We recognized that Zoe needed Tier 2 supports. In addition to guided reading with the classroom teacher, she started having a 2<sup>nd</sup> guided reading with the LS teacher.
  - She also joined an Rtl intervention group with the LS teacher that used the WonderWorks Intervention Kit that came with our new Reading Series.

## Fall/Winter Assessments

- After Zoe was selected for our case study in November 2014, we began administering additional assessments.
  - December 2014: Core Phonics Survey
  - December 2014: High Frequency Words Assessment
  - Aimsweb ORF & Comprehension Progress Monitoring
  - January 2015: CTOPP

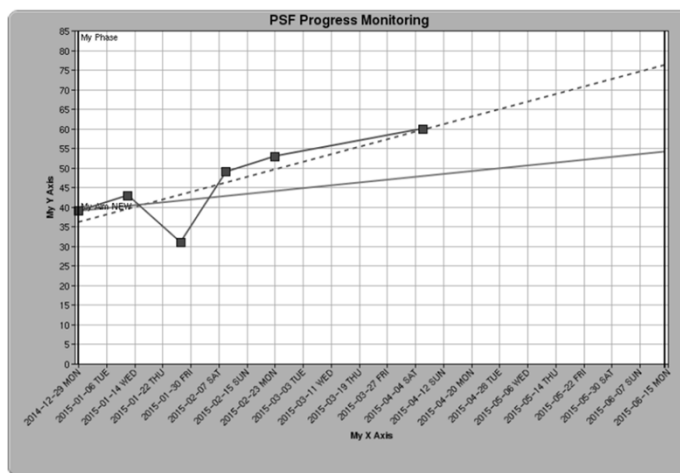
## Changes to Tier 2 Interventions & Adding Tier 3 Interventions

- Based on the additional data, we modified our instructional plan for Zoe in February 2015:
- Tier 2:
  - Guided Reading/Small Skills Group with the Classroom Teacher
  - Small group instruction (sight word, fluency, phonics, comprehension) with LS Teacher
- Tier 3:
  - Project Read with the LS Teacher
  - Speech services with Speech Clinician
- Progress Monitoring:
  - Dibels PSF & NWF

## Additional Changes to Instructional Plan in April 2015

- Based on progress monitoring data, we decided to intensify Zoe's Tier 3 intervention. We changed her Project Read intervention to Corrective Reading. This was one major qualitative change made to our Tier 3 service delivery. We found that throughout this process, we needed to increase the intensity of the intervention addressing decoding and fluency.
- We also added progress monitoring for ORF and discontinued progress monitoring for PSF.

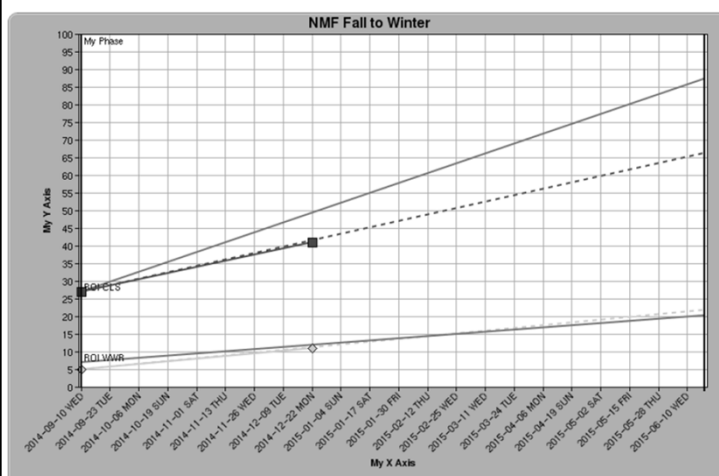
## ROI: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency



Needed ROI=.68  
Actual ROI=1.68

We discontinued progress monitoring for PSF in April 2015.

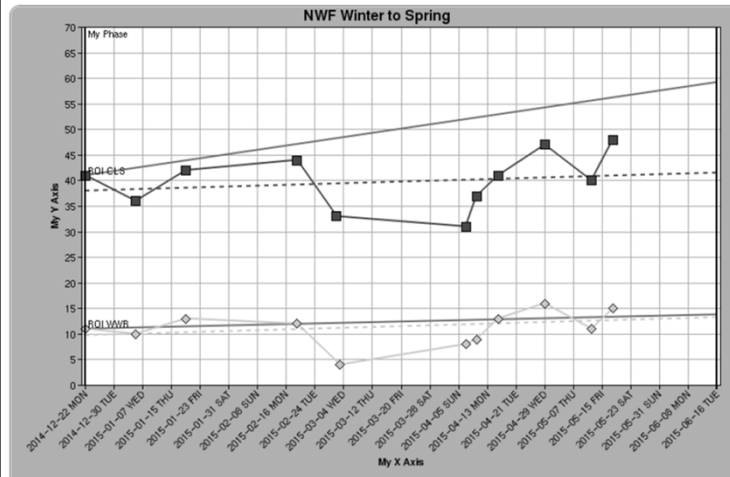
## ROI: Nonsense Word Fluency (Fall-Winter)



CLS:  
Needed ROI=1.5  
Actual ROI=.98

WWR:  
Needed ROI=.33  
Actual ROI=.42

## ROI: Nonsense Word Fluency (Winter-Spring)



CLS:  
Needed ROI=.72  
Actual ROI=.14

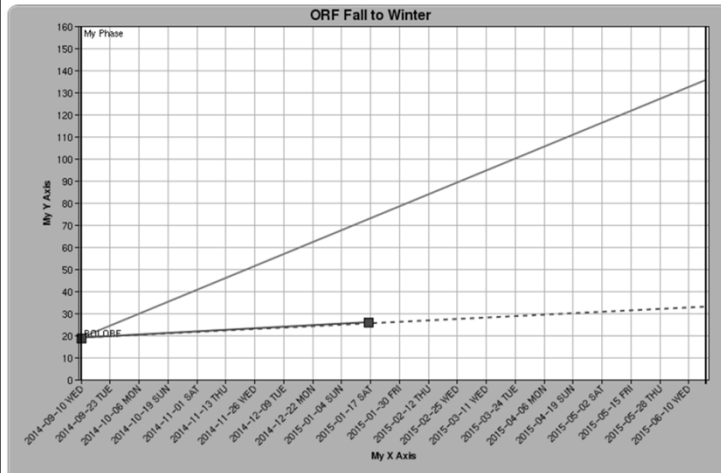
WWR:  
Needed ROI=.11  
Actual ROI=.14

Zoe is doing well with whole words read but is still inconsistent with correct letter sounds.

## Update!

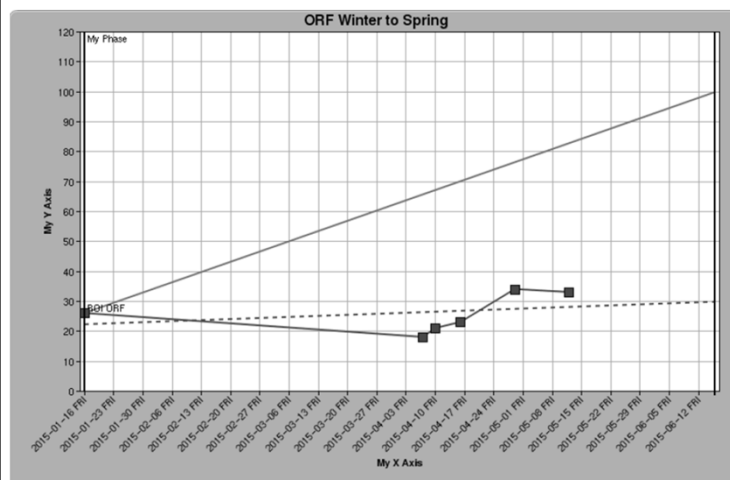
- After presenting this data in May 2015, we continued to progress monitor Zoe throughout the remainder of the school year.
- She did meet benchmark for NWF by the end of the year with scores of 61 CLS and 19 WWR!

## ROI: Oral Reading Fluency (Fall-Winter)



Needed ROI=2.9  
Actual ROI=.35

## ROI: Oral Reading Fluency (Winter-Spring)



Needed ROI=3.4  
Actual ROI=.35

We started progress monitoring ORF in April after discontinuing with PSF. This will be a larger focus for Zoe next school year.

## What have we learned from this process?

As part of participating in this problem-solving series, we were asked to reflect on some of the obstacles and challenges that were presented to our team.

### Capacity-Building Practice: Being Flexible With Scheduling

- As with many districts, we are overwhelmed with the amount of students who need additional support. Our Intervention teachers have very full schedules and service a lot of students. It can be difficult to find the time needed to meet to plan for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions as well as to find the time to implement those interventions. Because of this, most students are only receiving Tier 2 interventions in our building.
- We have had to be creative this year with finding the time to provide Zoe with the Tier 3 interventions she needs. Our LS teacher has taken the majority of the responsibility to find additional time for interventions. She has reorganized her schedule and the schedule of her instructional aides to allow time for her to teach Project Read and Corrective Reading.
- One of the consistent discussions we've had as a team is how we could possibly provide the time for Tier 3 interventions for all of the students who need them.
- We know that one of the goals of our administrative team this summer is to revamp our schedule. They are aware of the difficulty we've been having with scheduling interventions and we're hopeful that our new schedule can be more accommodating.



### Capacity-Building Practice: Working as a team to identify instructional needs and programming.

- Participating in the Tier 3 Problem Solving Series has demonstrated for us how important team planning time is for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction. With our case study specifically, the classroom teacher and LS teacher have had numerous opportunities to compare assessment data and discuss instructional goals and programming for Zoe. These conversations have helped us to refine Zoe's interventions and have ultimately led to better instruction for her.
- Also, having our school psychologist, speech clinician, principal, and other interventionists on our team has helped provide us with broader interpretation of data as well as more possible ideas for appropriate interventions.
- The whole team is in agreement that these types of meetings need to continue in the future, especially for our students who need Tier 3 Interventions.

### How did your team address the lack of clarity/distinction that often exists between Tiers 2 and 3?

- Prior to this Tier 3 Problem Solving series, our building only utilized Tier 2 interventions. We recognized the need for additional intervention but with staff and scheduling limitations, we hadn't implemented Tier 3 interventions. Because of this, our staff's understanding of Tiers 2 and 3 has always been inconsistent.
- After this training, our team views Tier 3 as additional intervention required when Tier 2 is not providing the ROI needed. Tier 3 is more intensive and occurs more often and is also more individualized for the student. We see Tier 3 as additional intervention that occurs on top of Tier 2 interventions.

Where there any hidden inefficiencies in the ways in which we used staff previously that we'll change in the future?

- One major inefficiency in our building is the allotment of time for the different grade levels. Currently, all grade levels receive equal time for their Title I support during guided reading and RtI time. What we're finding is that this isn't enough time for the early Tier 3 interventions needed for some students, especially students in lower grade levels.
- On the other hand, we recognize the need for intervention support at all grade levels.
- Unfortunately we do not have the staffing necessary to resolve this conflict.

**Professional Learning Needs Identified by the Team:**

- Explanation of Tiers 1, 2, & 3 and how they are related and work together
- Guidance on how to decide which students need Tier 2 & Tier 3 services and what options we have for providing these services
- How to use benchmark and screening data to inform instructional choices at all 3 tiers

**Structures to address adult learning needs & alignment:**

- Team meetings to discuss data and instructional decisions for students
- A new schedule that takes into account time needed for interventions

Any Questions?