Interpreting Progress Data
Rachel Brown, Ph.D., NCSP
Kelly Pelletier, M.S.

Overview
• Purpose of progress monitoring
• Data methods and display
• Interpretation guidelines
• Examples
• Practice

Purpose of Monitoring
• Shows if intervention is working
  – Tiered supports
  – IEPs
• Can be used as part of the data for SLD evaluation
  – Initial
  – Re-evaluation (should always happen)
Data Methods

- Single Case Design
- Alternative to large group or qualitative methods
- Tests the hypothesis that intervention created a change
- Uses graph to display data

Single Case Designs

- Multiple formats:
  - AB: Case study
  - ABA: Experimental
  - ABC, etc
- Experimental used in original research
- Case study best for progress monitoring
  - Avoids removing effective interventions

Sample Graph
Interpretation

- Consider:
  - Sufficient number of data
  - Variability
  - Trend
  - Rate of improvement
  - Goal
  - Possible options

Number of Data Points

- There must be at least 3 data points in order to review data
  - Gets beyond chance
- Usually, there will need to be 9-12 data points in order for the data to be interpretable
  - If an intervention is clearly not working, do something else

Stability

- Stability is the consistency of data
- Some variability in data is normal
- Consider the standard error of measurement (SEM) when looking at variability
- If variability is too high:
  - More data
  - Another measure
Trend

- A trend line is a straight line drawn through available data points to indicate the general direction
  - Most data programs do this automatically
- Helps to reduce the effects of variability

Increasing Trend

- Indicates that a behavior is strengthened
- Can be used to consider rate of improvement
- Might be good or bad
  - Depends on target behavior

Decreasing Trend

- Indicates that a behavior is weakened
- Can be used to consider rate of improvement
- Might be good or bad
  - Depends on target behavior
Rate of Improvement (ROI)

- The incremental change in a behavior
- Often calculated in weekly units
- Helpful in showing the specific changes in student skills
- Can be used for goal setting
  - Some assessments have expected ROI amounts

Goal

- In order for data to be helpful they must be compared to a goal
- Displaying the goal on the graph helps with interpretation
- Sometimes there might be interim goals along the way to a grade level goal or benchmark

Possible Options

- When reviewing data consider what next steps make the most sense based on:
  - Student needs
  - Available resources
    - Time
    - Personnel
    - Materials
Typical Progress Outcomes

- 3 main patterns that show an intervention:
  - Clearly works, or
  - Sort of works, or
  - Does not work

- Sometimes, the data are inconclusive and the team needs to await more data
Not Working

Too Little Data

Practice

- Examine the following graphs
- What can you conclude?
- What are the recommended next steps?
- What other information do you need to help with planning?
What about SEL data?

• Student socio-emotional data should be progress monitored as well.
• This can be accomplished by prioritizing behavioral goals at the schoolwide, classroom and individual level.
• Like progress monitoring for academic behavior, progress monitoring of SEL data should differ based on the tier.
• AIMSweb no longer has a module for SEL data monitoring

Tier 1

• School-wide expectations should be monitored at least twice a year (fall and spring).
  – Behavioral screeners (SAEBRS)
  – Direct behavioral ratings (DBR)
  – ODR data (SWISS)

Tier 2

• Select students that you notice could use extra assistance from your tier one data.
• Meet with your RTI team and determine additional instructional strategies.
  – Check in check out?
  – Points system for pro-social behavior?
  – Smaller group SEL?
  – More SEL?
  – Different SEL curriculum?
• Progress monitor every two weeks.
  – ODR data
  – Points data (how often is the student earning)
  – DBR data
Tier 3

- Select students who are not making progress according to visual inspection of your tier 2 data.
- Meet with your RTI teams and determine additional strategies.
  - FBA?
  - BSP?
  - 1:1 SEL instruction?
- Progress monitor every week (at least).
  - ODR data
  - Points data (how often is the student earning)
  - Frequency and/or duration data for behaviors targeted for reduction and pro-social behaviors targeted for increase.
  - Momentary time sampling

Summary

- Progress monitoring is how teachers know if additional instruction is working
- AIMSweb has tools for monitoring students in reading, math, and writing
- SEL behavior can be monitored through SWIIS, DBR or other strategies
- When setting up and revising progress schedules, it is important that the additional instruction name be added to the graph

Additional Resources
