

WEF funds megagrant for RTI Consultant

WEF funding enabled the **Response to Intervention** (RTI) program to go system-wide this September. The goal of the RTI program is to ensure that every student receives high quality academic instruction geared to his/her needs. As a pilot program with limited funds, RTI was put into place during the 2010/2011 academic year at Hunnewell School. Now with WEF's support, a specialist will be hired to ensure that students are given every possible opportunity to make progress in their learning before they are referred for special education services. By using this process, many students are able to meet benchmarks and become academically successful, thus reducing the need for special education referrals.

RTI is a tiered, progressive process that assesses students throughout the academic year to determine if they have met certain academic standards. Tier 1 intervention, for students who are below the standard, takes place in the classroom and is implemented by the classroom teacher or other qualified adult. The student's progress is then monitored weekly, and if the intervention's success is not realized, the student moves onto more specialized instruction.

Dr. Rebecca McFall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for WPS, presented the RTI process to the WEF board in the spring of 2011. The board's approval of funding for the RTI program allows the hiring of a specialist who will work throughout all the Wellesley elementary schools, with the goal of expanding the process into the middle school. Teachers already familiar with the RTI process have responded with great enthusiasm. With the continued success of RTI, WEF would like to see funding for this program permanently incorporated into future school budgets.

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