WHAT A STAR SHEET IS...

A STAR (Strategies And Resources) Sheet provides well-researched strategies or information that can help solve the case studies in this unit.

WHAT IT IS...

The dual-discrepancy approach is a method that involves evaluating a student’s performance level and rate of growth. It is the preferred method for determining whether students are responding adequately to Tier 2 and subsequent tiers of instruction.

WHAT THE RESEARCH AND RESOURCES SAY...

- The use of both criterion, performance level and rate of growth, has been shown to be the most reliable means of distinguishing between students who respond to instruction and those who do not. (McMaster, Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2002)

- Unlike with the IQ-achievement discrepancy model, the use of both criterion (performance level and rate of growth) to determine academic progress avoids gender bias or the overrepresentation of specific ethnic groups in special education services. (Speece, 2005)

- Students who are below the criteria for both performance level and rate of growth are not responding to the high-quality instruction provided and may benefit from more intensive instruction. (McMaster, Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2002)

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The dual-discrepancy approach is recommended for evaluating a student’s response to Tier 2 instruction and to more intensive levels of instruction. It is important to note that there is no set sequence for the evaluation of performance level and rate of growth. For the purposes of this case study, an order has been imposed on this process (see the steps below) because experience indicates that it is more common for students to meet their performance-level expectations (i.e., benchmarks) than to meet their rate-of-growth expectations (i.e., slopes). In effect, evaluating performance level first might reduce the amount of work teachers undertake to make tier decisions. When evaluating student progress for Tier 2, teachers should:

Step 1: Evaluate the performance level for each struggling student

- If a student’s performance level meets or exceeds the relevant benchmark, the student is making adequate progress (see the table below).
RTI: Data-Based Decision Making
Using the Dual-Discrepancy Approach

- If a student’s performance level does not meet the benchmark Go to Step 2.

Step 2: Evaluate the rate of growth

- If a student’s slope meets or exceeds the established rate of growth, the student is making adequate progress (see the table below).

- If a student’s slope does not meet the established rate of growth Provide Tier 3 intensive, individualized instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meets Criteria</th>
<th>Performance Level</th>
<th>Rate of Growth</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Making Adequate Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Making Adequate Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Making Adequate Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Making Adequate Progress; Needs More Intensive Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example

Andy, a first-grade student, has received Tier 2 instruction for 10 weeks. It is now time for his teacher and the S-team to determine whether he has responded adequately to instruction and to make an instructional placement decision based on his progress monitoring data. Using the dual-discrepancy approach, his teacher first determines his performance level. If Andy’s performance level meets or exceeds the relevant benchmark, the team will determine that he is making adequate progress and will either discontinue Tier 2 instruction or provide another round of Tier 2 instruction. If Andy’s performance level does not meet the ten-week benchmark, 37 wpm, the team will calculate his rate of growth (i.e., slope).

Step 1: Evaluate Andy’s performance level

Andy’s performance level is 34 wpm.
Andy’s performance level is 34 wpm. Because he did not meet the designated ten-week benchmark of 37 wpm, his teacher needs to calculate his rate of growth.

**Step 2: Evaluate Andy’s rate of growth**

Andy’s rate of growth is 2.1, which exceeds the established criterion of 1.8. This indicates that Andy is not dually discrepant and may discontinue Tier 2 instruction. Because Andy has not met his benchmark, some teams might decide that Andy would benefit from another round of Tier 2 instruction.

**RESOURCES**

