Reflections on Observing RTI Strategies in Kindergarten Education

## Introduction

The purpose of this reflection is to examine the observations made in Mrs. Chambless's Kindergarten classroom, specifically focusing on the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework to support struggling students. Observing the class comprised of 18 students, four of whom are at the onset of the RTI process, provided an insightful perspective on how RTI is operationalized in early education settings. The RTI framework in this context is structured into three tiers, each designed to address varying levels of student needs. This reflection aims to explore how these tiers are effectively utilized in Mrs. Chambless's classroom to identify and support students requiring additional assistance. By focusing on both the observed strategies and the data-driven approaches employed, the reflection seeks to highlight the potential of RTI in enhancing educational outcomes for young learners in the foundational stages of their academic journey.

## RTI Tiers and Implementation

In Mrs. Chambless's Kindergarten classroom, the RTI framework is executed through a structured tier system designed to cater to diverse student needs. Tier 1 involves whole-class instruction aimed at initial engagement and identifying students who might require additional support. This tier provides a broad foundation, ensuring that all students receive essential instruction, while simultaneously allowing for the early detection of those needing further intervention. Moving to Tier 2, targeted small group instruction addresses shared needs, employing the expertise of reading and math interventionists to provide more focused support. Tier 3 offers intensive interventions, primarily for behavioral challenges, integrating behavior plans and school-based counseling to address the specific needs of individual students (Jiménez et al., 2021). Through this tiered approach, the RTI framework not only identifies students in need of support but also systematically delivers tailored interventions to enhance student success in the foundational stages.

Data collection and monitoring are integral to the RTI process in Mrs. Chambless's classroom, facilitating informed decision-making to support student progress. Tools such as PowerSchool and Acadience are employed to systematically track student performance, offering insights into areas where students excel or require additional support. PowerSchool logs provide a comprehensive overview of student attendance, grades, and behavioral incidents, while Acadience assessments deliver detailed reports on literacy and numeracy skills, ensuring that interventions are precisely targeted. SuccessMaker's digital platform further enhances this approach by offering individualized math instruction, generating reports that highlight both skill mastery and areas needing improvement. These tools collectively enable educators to monitor progress effectively, ensuring that interventions are adapted to meet the evolving needs of students, thereby optimizing educational outcomes (Jiménez et al., 2021).

Reflecting on the challenges and strategies in using RTI data for decision-making reveals several complexities in Mrs. Chambless's classroom. One significant challenge is accurately identifying students for interventions, particularly due to the varied preschool experiences that affect kindergarten readiness. To address this, teachers must rely on consistent data analysis to discern whether a student's struggles stem from a learning disability or insufficient instruction. Effective communication with stakeholders, including parents and intervention specialists, is crucial to ensure that data-driven decisions are transparent and collaboratively developed. This communication is facilitated through tools like PowerSchool and Acadience, which provide comprehensive data that educators can share with stakeholders to align on intervention strategies and progress monitoring (Jiménez et al., 2021).

## Conclusion

Observations of the RTI implementation in Mrs. Chambless's Kindergarten class underscore the essential role of structured, tiered interventions in addressing diverse student needs. The systematic approach of RTI not only facilitates the identification of struggling students but also ensures that interventions are tailored to specific educational and behavioral challenges. The integration of data-driven instruction, utilizing tools like PowerSchool and Acadience, highlights the importance of precise monitoring and evaluation in crafting effective learning strategies. Collaboration among educators, intervention specialists, and stakeholders emerges as a critical component, fostering a supportive environment that enhances student success. Overall, the insights gained from this reflective observation emphasize the potential of RTI frameworks in creating adaptive and responsive educational experiences for young learners, laying a strong foundation for their academic journey.