

Welcome

The aim of NCLII is to increase the number of special education leadership personnel who have expertise in meeting the co-occurring academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities who have “intense service needs”. The purpose of this newsletter is to give you a general overview of the current activities of the consortium.

Currently we have 18 doctoral scholars enrolled in the 7 universities represented in NCLII. We plan to enroll a second cohort of 10 scholars in the fall of 2016. The scholars have been busy working on the year one curriculum that provides a foundation for knowledge in intensive intervention approaches. Faculty have been busy contributing time to the project through various committee work and mentorship.



Visit us on the web at <http://nclii.org/> to view current scholar bios and participating faculty.

To view the NCLII member directory <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/utrlgobe342vfjs/AACwcfecW-Y5JS-bX68bOybMa?dl=0>

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Upcoming Dates

Wednesday April 13– NCLII Meeting at CEC. This will be a joint meeting with NLCSD. Time: 9:00-4:00



NCLII Fall Meeting—November 2015

Curriculum Committee Update

The NCLII Curriculum Committee has had a busy first year on the project. Faculty members from all partner institutions have devoted time to thinking deeply about critical aspects of intensive intervention that we wanted to ensure the NCLII scholars were exposed to during their first year. The year one curriculum introduced scholars to intensive intervention and highlighted the many reasons why this approach has potential to dramatically improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The scholars learned about various approaches to intensifying interventions using different forms of data (i.e., general outcome measures, mastery measurement, data from single case designs). In the final two modules for year one, scholars will learn about alternative approaches to thinking about intensive intervention and they will begin working on end-of-year products in which they will synthesize material learned across all year one modules. The products created by the scholars will be disseminated on our website.

The curriculum is being delivered through an online tool called Moodle (www.ncliilearning.org) Participating faculty have selected important reading materials, generated a series of videos in which topics are introduced and discussed, and created various interactive activities for the scholars to engage in to deepen understanding. For example, in one module, the scholars interviewed instructional coaches who are supporting classroom teachers as part of the National Center on Intensive Intervention (www.intensiveintervention.org).

The scholars have provided very positive feedback about the content of the curriculum and the interactive activities. Further, the scholars are reporting that the ongoing engagement with scholars and faculty across the consortium is enhancing their doctoral experience.

Committee members are currently working on the design of next year's curriculum with the aim of digging in deeper to features of intensive intervention and in supporting the scholars as they integrate concepts of intensive intervention into their developing lines of research.

Evaluation Committee Update

The NCLII Evaluation Committee has been working with our partners at OSEP and the Center for Improved Project Performance (CIPP) to develop a plan that includes on-going **quantitative** and **qualitative** data collection that will allow for a thorough and on-going evaluation of progress toward project objectives. Proposed activities include frequent contact between NCLII Faculty, Scholars, and the Advisory Board members to evaluate progress toward accomplishing project aims. The evaluation will provide data on the success of the program by evaluating the accomplishments of NCLII Scholars across all stages of the program. To collect this information, we have developed several tools.

First, we have developed the **Scholar Tracking Survey** using the REDCap data collection system. REDCap is a secure web application for building and managing online surveys and databases. The Scholar Tracking Survey allow Scholars to input data through out each semester of the program. Data include updates on completion of both IHE specific milestones required for doctoral training at each institution as well as milestones required of the NCLII training program

Second, data (also using REDCap) will be collected from participating faculty members using the **Faculty Survey**. This instrument, consisting of yes/no questions and rating scales will collect information on faculty perspective of project activities as well as ask questions related to how NCLII activities have impacted their own research in intensive intervention. Faculty will complete the **Faculty Survey** at the end of each academic year.

Third, as a part of the Intervention Core Curriculum, we have established the **Module Evaluation Form** within each module that will allow Scholars to provide feedback on the content of each module including questions related the organization of the modules and offers the opportunity for Scholars to provide feedback on improving module content. This assessment will be collected at the completion of each module.

These data collection tools will allow us to capture ongoing learning, fulfilled opportunities, collaborative research and internships, and the demonstration of required competencies by the Scholars.

University of Texas at Austin

Sarah Powell, Assistant Professor

Marcia Barnes, Professor

Amanda Martinez-Lincoln, NCLII Scholar



Project

Developing connections between word problems and mathematical equations (IES R324A150078)

Tell us about a project you are working on this semester.

In this project, we provide word-problem intervention to third-grade students at-risk for math disability. We randomly assigned students to one of two word-problem interventions or a no-treatment control. Both word-problem interventions teach students to set up and solve word problems using schemas. In addition, one of the interventions also focuses on the meaning of math symbols. Our goal is to learn how to best help students improve their math word-problem solving and understand the role of symbol understanding within word-problem solving. We are also exploring different cognitive (e.g., working memory) and academic (e.g., math fluency) factors that may impact an individual student's response to the intervention.

How does this project relate to intensive intervention?

This project relates to intensive intervention because we provide individual tutoring to at-risk students. Students work with tutors for 50, 30-min sessions spread across a school year. Our project provides intensive intervention with the aim to prevent students from being identified as having a math disability. Our project also wants to investigate the best intensive intervention package for improving the word-problem solving performance of students who have difficulty with such a task.

What has been the best part of your doctoral program so far? (From Amanda Martinez-Lincoln)

Being able to partake in research has been the best part of my doctoral program thus far. Assisting with the implementation of the word-problem project has expanded my knowledge for the execution of a large-scale intensive intervention. Specifically, I have learned numerous methodological considerations of conducting research to determine the efficacy of an intervention for students at-risk for a math disability. The word-problem project has also provided practical experience necessary in conducting a successful research project. In addition, Dr. Barnes and Dr. Powell encourage thought-provoking discussions of the current research literature. They foster a supportive learning environment in which to develop and conduct independent research projects.

University of Illinois at Chicago

Daniel Maggin, Marie Tejero Hughes

Gina Braun, Chrissy Brown, Skip Kumm, Samantha Walte



How do teachers perceive the clarity of the implementation process of tiers two and three in the MTSS for academics in grades K-5 in urban settings?

Tell us about a project you are working on this semester.

Research has shown that there is a lack of clarity in how academic tiers are implemented when using a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). The purpose of our project is to further the field's understanding of the current design and implementation of tiers two and three in MTSS for academics in urban schools through teachers' perceptions. As a result of the current lack of standardization, schools are open to interpret and implement tiered interventions as they deem necessary. The lack of consistency in tier two and tier three academic interventions in primary schools has resulted in a system of supports that does not provide uniformed, quality instruction, for all students. Furthermore, the lack of clarity on implementation results in students progressing through MTSS at varying rates. Since many schools use the process of MTSS as a decision-making tool for special education placement, the process needs to be a uniform system to ensure all students are receiving the same quality instruction within schools.

For this research we will engage in interviews with general education and special education teachers in elementary schools across several urban school districts. Our unstructured interview process will allow for teachers to describe their understanding of their schoolwide MTSS process and how they use it for their students.

How does this project relate to intensive intervention?

When implemented with fidelity, the MTSS process provides opportunities for teachers to analyze student data and make informed decisions on their learning programs. The MTSS process allows teachers to provide interventions and assess student learning through progress monitoring. The data help teachers decide whether or not the intervention is working or needs to be intensified. Our research we will help us better understand teachers perspectives of their schoolwide MTSS process and whether or not it is lending itself to providing the appropriate interventions for students. Additionally, we are interested in seeing how teachers perceive their schools process of moving students between tiers.

What has been the best part of your doctoral program so far?

The best part of our program has been the opportunities to collaborate, work, and learn alongside faculty and other scholars. We enjoy having the chance to work with faculty at our own institution as well as others. The collaborative learning we participate in with scholars from all over has been invaluable to our experiences.