

# Here's what I think ...

**By Ty Ankrom**

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Often in education we can get weary with what seem to be cyclical changes in teaching and testing methods. But reviewing what we do can lead to more successful outcomes.

Vicki Scott, principal at Laurelville Elementary School, discovered the benefits that come with rethinking the way she and her colleagues handle Response to Intervention (RTI).

RTI is used to address students who are having difficulties and provides them with intervention and support.

However, Vicki noticed that the process that had been in place for nearly two decades – Intervention Assistance Teams – seemed to be stagnating. In an article in *Principal Navigator*, the magazine of the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators, she wrote:

“We learned that we continued to miss the mark in meeting the needs of the students because we were more focused on talking about the problems and documenting the needs of the students but not enough time in addressing the real issues.”

By reviewing what wasn't working, Vicki and her colleagues came up with a way to revise the Intervention Assistance Teams to provide actual solutions for students who need help.

The original process involved a lot of forms but not a lot of focus. The RTI group now consists of those professionals who work most closely with the student: the LLI teacher, Reading Recovery teacher, intervention tutor, Title I teacher, support staff and a guidance counselor.

Instead of focusing on paperwork, the group now focuses on where the student's difficulties started and how to help him or her.

Where once the monthly meetings ended with plans to meet again for more discussion, this new process allows for immediate feedback and successes.

“As a team we share strategies, brainstorm alternative schedules or accommodations. ... We strive to find creative ways of working together, so the needs of the student can be addressed immediately and successfully.”

Vicki's work shows that sometimes, rethinking how you do something can lead to a better way of doing it.

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