

## Summary of the SOPAA Components and Roles

### The SOPAA Components and Key Features within Each Component

#### ***Component 1: Targeted Assistance Program for Students (TAPS)***

1. Process for the classroom teacher to request support from the TAPS Teacher.
2. Process for pinpointing a student's academic deficit and developing a list of intervention programs that should target and improve the deficit.
3. Process for developing, documenting, and implementing an intervention plan designed to assist the classroom teacher and improve the student's learning difficulty.
4. Process for evaluating and discussing the effectiveness of the student's intervention plan (after it has been implemented a specified number of week) and making subsequent decisions that should benefit the student's learning.

#### ***Component 2: Assessment for Instruction***

1. Targeted skills observation that occurs prior to developing a TAPS intervention plan, to ensure the intervention plan targets the sub-skill or sub-skills the student struggles with most.
2. Progress monitoring assessment during implementation of a student's TAPS intervention plan.
3. School-wide benchmark assessments in reading and math to help teachers identify students who struggle in these areas and may benefit from a TAPS intervention plan.

#### ***Component 3: Maximized Intervention Personnel and Resources***

1. System for training and coordinating assistive school personnel (e.g., teacher assistants, librarians, and possibly other types of educators in the school) who can implement targeted intervention programs with students during a TAPS case.
2. System for training and coordinating school volunteers who can implement targeted intervention programs with students during a TAPS case.
3. Identification and selection of learner-verified and/or evidence-based intervention programs that can be used for during the TAPS process to target each sub-skill for reading, math, and writing.

#### ***Component 4: Targeted Professional Development***

1. Ongoing professional development for each TAPS Teacher that is aligned with the SOPAA.
2. One to three professional development workshops for classroom teachers in areas that are aligned with the SOPAA (e.g., learning how to implement an intervention program or use a type of progress monitoring assessment tool).
  - a. As applicable, professional development also occurs for assistive school personnel and/or school volunteers to learn intervention programs that are used with TAPS cases.
3. Embedded within the TAPS process (see Component 1, feature #4), when evaluating the effectiveness of a student's intervention plan, each teacher involved with a TAPS case reflects upon, documents, and discusses the case (e.g., aspects that were successful, unsuccessful, or improved over time). The TAPS Teacher also helps the classroom teacher relate the TAPS case to prior experiences (e.g., information obtained during previous TAPS cases or during SOPAA professional development workshops).

### ***Component 5: Methods for Communication and Generating Support***

1. Steps for communicating with school leaders (e.g., the principal) about key aspects of the SOPAA (e.g., need for using the SOPAA in the school, how the SOPAA aligns with the school's existing practices, time or material resources related to the SOPAA) and ultimately generating leadership's support for SOPAA implementation.
2. Steps for communicating with classroom teachers about key aspects and benefits of the SOPAA, and ultimately generating teachers' support for SOPAA implementation.
3. Process for communicating the TAPS procedures and process to all educators in the school who will be involved with SOPAA implementation.
4. Steps for evaluating the SOPAA across years and communicating with other educators about SOPAA implementation (e.g., strengths, weaknesses, and improvements) in order to sustain or increase educators' support for implementation.
5. Process for communicating among the SOPAA co-facilitators to ensure effective and efficient SOPAA implementation.

### ***Component 6: Adaptable and Incremental Implementation***

1. Multiple options for modifying and adapting SOPAA implementation (particularly in the early years) in a way that is most feasible for a school and matched to the school's needs, strengths, and characteristics. Thus, the model allows for modified but meaningful implementation.
2. Multiple options for incremental implementation so that a school can *start* implementation in a way that is beneficial, but can continually (and systematically) increase the scope of implementation to better meet the needs of all struggling learners.

#### **The Five SOPAA Roles**<sup>a</sup>

1. SOPAA Lead Coordinator (or simply, Lead Coordinator)<sup>b</sup>
2. TAPS Reading Teacher
3. TAPS Math Teacher
4. TAPS Writing Teacher
5. TAPS Intervention Support Coordinator (or simply, TAPS Support Coordinator)

<sup>a</sup> Depending on the SOPAA implementation plan, some roles may not be needed. For example, if the SOPAA plan is only designed to target students' reading deficits, there would not be a designated TAPS Math Teacher or TAPS Writing Teacher. Also depending on the SOPAA implementation plan, a SOPAA facilitator may have more than one role.

<sup>b</sup> The Lead Coordinator will always have a TAPS Teacher role in addition to the Lead Coordinator role.

## Understanding the *Systems-Oriented Plan for Academic Achievement (SOPAA)* Model in the Context of Other Models of Instructional Problem Solving, such as RTI

### How is the SOPAA Model Consistent with models like RTI?

1. The overall function of both models is to provide a problem solving process to (a) improve student learning in reading, math, and writing; (b) prevent inappropriate referrals to special education; and (c) prevent unnecessary removal of students from general education.
  - **The SOPAA model provides a detailed and well-aligned system for maximizing effectiveness and efficiency at the Tier 2 level of support, but does so in a way that connects Tier 2 with instruction and intervention at Tiers 1 and 3 (assuming the RTI model is a three-tiered model).**
2. Both models involve meaningful collaboration of school staff in the delivery of rigorous instruction and appropriate interventions. Similarly, “the collaboration between the Tier 2 intervention teacher and Tier 1 classroom teacher(s) should be frequent and focused on progress monitoring data” (p. 42).
  - **A goal of the SOPAA model is to help facilitate this collaborative relationship and ensure a common language of instruction, assessment, and intervention. In addition, the SOPAA is intended to document the Tier 2 intervention process clearly and efficiently, for the purposes of instructional decision making and supporting the target student.**
3. Both models recognize the importance of factors such as:
  - Using standards-based instruction and an effective core curriculum.
  - Using universal screening and progress monitoring.
  - Using assessment to guide instruction and intervention.
  - Primarily at Tier 2, having a process for using pre-determined, “standard,” scientifically based interventions in a specific sequence with identified students.
    - “Tier 2 interventions should be pre-planned, developed, and supported at the school level, thereby becoming —standard intervention protocols that are proactively in place for students who need them” (p. 42).
    - “Schools have the responsibility to use scientifically validated (research and evidence-based) intervention methods to prevent wasting time and effort and to give students the best chance to be successful (Wright, 2007)” (p. 53).
  - Ensuring a successful transfer of student learning from Tier 2 to Tier 1 activities.
  - Implementation integrity
    - “Interventions must be implemented with fidelity, that is, consistently implemented following the delivery method and program originator’s design (time, frequency, etc.)” (p. 46).
  - Best utilizing educators’ time devoted to team-based problem solving (usually done in Tier 3)
    - “Ultimately, the success of any SST relies on the foundation of Tiers 1 and 2. Success is attainable when schools analyze their data to identify school-wide, classroom, and individual student needs and by their use of research based strategies and interventions led by ongoing professional learning, coaching, and measurement of student response to these supports” (p. 4).
4. Both models recognize that assessment processes need to be consistent among the teachers in a grade level, and ideally, within the school. This is important because “common formative assessments will be the glue that binds groups of teachers together to discuss teaching and learning” (p. 39).

### **How can the SOPAA model be used to support and enhance schools using models such as RTI?**

The fact that many schools already use RTI is a great step in the right direction! The SOPAA model is intended to *enhance* any school's RTI/problem-solving process—not replace it.

Overall, the SOPAA model offers detailed recommendations and materials that are well-aligned and designed to support the day-to-day complexities and barriers associated with (a) facilitating Tier 2 support, and (b) linking Tier 2 intervention with instruction that occurs in the other Tiers of the problem-solving model.

For example, using the SOPAA model may:

1. Enhance a school's efficiency (time and resources), effectiveness, and documentation of Tier 2 support in reading, math, and writing.
2. Offer detailed guidance for strengthening key elements of any successful problem-solving model, such as:
  - a. Ensuring that intervention specialists have thorough and up-to-date training/knowledge in intervention and assessment so they can best support teachers and struggling learners.
  - b. Identifying research-based assessments and interventions (see, for example, Chapters 6 and 12 of the SOPAA guidebook).
  - c. Linking valid assessment with the most appropriate intervention (see Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 12).
  - d. Ensuring that all interventionists are properly trained and use selected interventions with fidelity.
  - e. Maximizing a school's resources for delivering research-based interventions (e.g., using a range of school personnel and/or school volunteers).
  - f. Generating and evaluating teacher support for using a systematic model of problem-solving.
  - g. Documenting the effectiveness of a school's problem-solving process.
3. Better ensure that the activities that occur during Tier 2 support are completely useful for instructional decision-making at the other Tiers or 4.
4. Help "slow to respond" schools implement a problem-solving model in an incremental but strategic way.
5. Offer additional guidance for how to use multiple formative assessments. For example, Chapter 5 (pp. 77-87) and Chapter 6 of the SOPAA guidebook describe how to use curriculum-based measurement (CBM) along with other methods of assessment, such as those that are "built in" to an intervention program.

The following paragraph from the SOPAA guidebook further summarizes how the SOPAA model can be used with schools already using problem-solving approaches such as Response to Intervention (RTI).

For schools with RTI currently in place and no prior experience with the SOPAA, adding components of SOPAA may be helpful in assuring the RTI process runs more smoothly. For example, the recruitment and training of community-based volunteers would likely increase the number of second tier interventions available, or free up educators for complex interventions where trained volunteers are not appropriate and credentialed teachers or specialists are required. Also, developing and documenting interventions may be more systematic and time-efficient through using the TAPS process, and clear documentation would provide a means of evaluating the efficacy of all interventions developed and implemented. Further, targeted professional development activities and TAPS Teachers' ongoing professional development might better facilitate intervention and assessment practices embedded within the RTI model. Finally, SOPAA includes a structured system of evaluating the TAPS problem-solving process and communicating with teachers about the effectiveness and potential changes in the process, which is not always explicit within a RTI model (p. 47-48).

**Schoolwide Capacity Assessment of Relevant Characteristics** (page 2 of 5)

3. If a student is identified with a learning difficulty (and the student is not being evaluated for, nor does he or she currently have, a disability classification), how do teachers assist the student?
  - a. At what times during the school year do teachers usually report concerns about student learning difficulties?
  - b. To whom does a teacher generally report his or her concerns about a student's learning difficulty (e.g., with key members of the school, with a grade-level team, with an intervention support team)?
  - c. Do teachers usually report concerns about student learning difficulties immediately upon recognizing the difficulties or after the difficulties have been present for some period of time?
  - d. Is there a schoolwide system in place for teachers to report a student's academic difficulties and seek assistance regarding those difficulties? If so,
    - i. How does the system work?
    - ii. Do referrals get addressed quickly and efficiently?
    - iii. What are the advantages and disadvantages of that system?
    - iv. Does the system involve a form of consultation, and if so:
      1. Who within the school provides consultative services?
      2. What are the procedures for facilitating those consultation services?
      3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of those consultative services?
      4. How regularly do teachers rely on those consultative services?
  - e. If a team problem-solving approach is used to help teachers address a student's academic difficulties, what are the strengths and weaknesses of that approach? Related questions are as follows:
    - i. Which teachers attend the team meetings?
    - ii. Do some members of the team contribute more or less to problem solving?
    - iii. Is there a person on the team who takes the lead in "managing" the meetings and/or referrals?
    - iv. Is the team able to meet and develop an intervention quickly after the teacher's referral for team problem solving?
    - v. What is the role of formal assessment with teachers' referrals?
    - vi. Are there challenges to scheduling and/or facilitating team meetings?
    - vii. Do team meetings efficiently address the academic referral?
  - f. Do certain school personnel consult in specific academic areas (e.g., reading, math, and writing) and how successful are they in their consultative roles?
  - g. How do teachers within the school select interventions to assist struggling learners? Related to this:
    - i. Is there a "menu" of common interventions from which teachers select?
    - ii. Are teachers generally able to select interventions that specifically address the primary area of academic concern (e.g., phonemic awareness, addition facts, spelling errors)?
    - iii. Do most teachers seek out interventions that have been supported by educational research?
    - iv. What resources do teachers commonly use to find academic interventions (e.g., books, journals, websites, colleague recommendations)?
4. After a student is identified as having a learning difficulty (and the student is not being evaluated for, nor does he or she currently have, a disability classification), who provides intervention services once the intervention is selected?
  - a. Generally, what proportion of intervention service delivery is provided by regular education teachers, special education teachers, other school personnel (e.g., reading specialists, school psychologists), and school volunteers?
  - b. Does your school require that the implementation integrity of an intervention is monitored and/or recorded?
  - c. Who within your school has extensive experience implementing evidence-based interventions in reading, math, and/or writing, and what interventions are commonly implemented?

(cont.)

**Schoolwide Capacity Assessment of Relevant Characteristics** (page 3 of 5)

5. What role do school volunteers have in your school?
  - a. Who are your school volunteers (e.g., parents of children in your school, university students, high school students, community members)?
  - b. Where are school volunteers recruited from and how are they recruited?
  - c. Does your school (or district) have a system for recruiting school volunteers, and if so, who manages that system and is it managed successfully?
  - d. Are school volunteers sometimes used to implement academic interventions, and if so, what types of interventions do school volunteers provide?
  - e. Are school volunteers used in the most helpful ways possible?
  - f. Can you think of additional ways that school volunteers could be utilized to support teachers' work in the classroom?
  - g. How committed are your school volunteers (e.g., how many days per week do they volunteer, for how long do they volunteer each day, for how many weeks do they maintain involvement)?
  - h. Does it appear that school volunteers' work is valued by the teachers and administration in your school?
  - i. Does it appear that school volunteers feel satisfied with the work they are providing at your school?
6. In a typical school year, how many staff development workshops are dedicated to helping teachers learn about and address students' academic difficulties?
  - a. Do teachers generally seem interested in learning more about and using new academic interventions and/or assessments?
  - b. Who within the school and/or district offers workshops on evidence-based academic interventions?
  - c. Who within the school and/or district offers workshops on academic assessment?
  - d. Have teachers (formally or informally) indicated interest in learning about particular topics that will help them address students' learning difficulties (e.g., a particular academic intervention, general principles related to student learning), and if so, are there teachers in the school who could successfully host a workshop covering those areas of interest?
7. Who are the key leaders in the school that help to influence schoolwide changes?
  - a. Are teachers and administrators within your school more likely to be supportive of, or resistant to, schoolwide changes?
  - b. What types of schoolwide changes do you believe teachers in your school would be most and least supportive of?
  - c. What factors are likely to be most important for influencing the motivation of most teachers to implement new schoolwide procedures and/or policies?
  - d. What factors are likely to be most important for influencing the motivation of your administrators to implement new schoolwide procedures and/or policies?
  - e. What are the primary assets and barriers associated with school-wide change in your school?
  - f. In recent years have there been schoolwide changes in your school that were initiated by someone within your school (as opposed to primarily district, regional, or statewide mandates for change)? If so:
    - i. Were those changes implemented successfully?
    - ii. How long did it take for all of the changes to be implemented effectively by all teachers?
    - iii. Was the entire schoolwide change implemented all at once, or was it implemented incrementally (e.g., starting with only some components, starting with only some grade levels, starting with only some teachers)?
    - iv. Did teachers collaborate to support schoolwide change (e.g., did some teachers share management responsibilities for different components)?
    - v. How was momentum and support for the change established?

(cont.)

## APPENDIX G

### TAPS Intervention Planning Form (IPF) and Record

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

TAPS Support Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of planning meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal 1: Share results from skills observation, ask follow-up questions to specify the teacher's primary concern, and get ratings on the TAPS Case Rating Scale.**

*Write primary concern here:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Write additional notes that may be relevant to intervention implementation and success:* \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check this box to indicate that the TAPS Case Rating Scale has been completed.

**Goal 2: Discuss the list of feasible, evidence-based intervention programs and select the most suitable program that will directly address the primary concern.**

*Write the selected intervention program here:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal 3: Develop the Intervention Plan.**

1. Who will implement the intervention program? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Will a predeveloped intervention protocol be modified in any way, and if so, how and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How will intervention implementers get trained (if applicable)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where will the intervention be implemented and at what times of day? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How many minutes of intervention (and/or lessons) will occur each day, and how many days per week will intervention occur? \_\_\_\_\_
6. On what date will implementation begin and what days per week will the intervention occur? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How will implementation integrity be evaluated, by whom, and when? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How will student progress be monitored (e.g., with what form of assessment, how often, by whom)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Who will contact the student's parent(s) to inform him or her about the intervention plan, seek parent input, and seek possible support? \_\_\_\_\_

(cont.)

**TAPS Intervention Planning Form (IPF) and Record (page 2 of 2)**

10. When will the parent(s) be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_ (If a parent offers objections, input, or support that prompts a change in the intervention plan, this should be communicated between the classroom teacher and TAPS teacher immediately; if applicable, changes should be made to the intervention plan.)
11. Date for initial review of intervention plan and signatures (this meeting must occur no more than 1–2 weeks after the date specified in Item 6): \_\_\_\_\_
12. How many weeks of intervention will occur before the TAPS Formal Review of Intervention Effectiveness? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Specify an objective goal the student should meet, resulting from the intervention: \_\_\_\_\_
14. By approximately what date will the intervention period (specified in Item 12) be completed? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Specify the date for the Summative Review of Intervention Effectiveness meeting (must be within 2 weeks of the date specified in Item 14): \_\_\_\_\_
16. How will periodic “follow-ups” of intervention success occur (e.g., who will initiate them, approximately how often)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Signatures below specify agreement on the intervention plan and that both parties agree to fulfill their roles unless extenuating circumstances arise. Signatures also specify that the student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) was contacted to obtain verbal consent for this intervention plan. Signatures should occur during the meeting date specified in Item 11.**

Classroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TAPS Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's parent/guardian gave verbal consent for plan (check one): ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No reply  
(List all dates parent[s] was called: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Intervention Follow-Up Information**

Date of follow-up:	Notes from follow-up (e.g., implementation difficulties/successes, minor changes to intervention plan, need for extended meeting):
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____
12. _____	_____
13. _____	_____