


Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Office of Learning Supports



Decision Rules

September 2025, Version 1

What are Decision Rules?

Decision rules are clear, predetermined guidelines or criteria that teams use to determine when a student requires additional support, when to adjust existing interventions, or when to consider reducing or discontinuing support. These rules ensure decisions are consistent, data-driven, and equitable.

How are Decision Rules Made?

Decision rules are made through a collaborative, data-driven process that ensures consistency and effectiveness in Response to Intervention (RTI). Here's how they are typically developed:

Define Clear Goals: Establish specific, measurable student outcomes (academic or behavioral) based on grade-level expectations or individualized targets.

Use Research-Based Criteria: Refer to evidence-based guidelines, such as the rate of expected growth or benchmarks from standardized assessments, to set thresholds for adequate progress.

Analyze Local Data: Consider historical data and trends from your school or district to inform what constitutes typical versus insufficient progress.

Define specific indicators for evaluating progress, such as:

1. The number of consecutive data points falling below the expected progress
2. Limited or no measurable improvement over a designated period of time
3. The percentage of the goal that has been met compared to the target outcome

Involve a Team: Develop rules collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team (e.g., general education teachers, specialists, administrators) to ensure buy-in and consistency.

Document and Communicate: Clearly write out the decision rules and share them with all stakeholders to ensure consistent application.

Review and Revise: Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of decision rules and adjust as needed based on new data or outcomes.

