

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course:** Pyramid Response to Intervention: How to Respond When Kids Don't Learn

**Presenters:** Austin Buffum, Mike Mattos, and Chris Weber

**Hours:** 45

**Required eBook:** *Pyramid Response to Intervention: RTI, Professional Learning Communities, and How to Respond When Kids Don't Learn*

### Course Overview

Students who don't get the education they need run higher risks not only of dropping out of school, but of incarceration, homelessness, and early death. Pyramid response to intervention (PRTI) seeks to remedy that situation—and has met with remarkable success—by systematically identifying students' needs, providing targeted interventions, monitoring students' progress, modifying interventions as necessary, and thereby enabling all of a school's or district's students to learn at high levels. In this course, expert presenters Austin Buffum, Mike Mattos, and Chris Weber share their experience implementing PRTI. They take participants through the critical stages of establishing professional learning communities (PLCs) within schools and districts, using universal screening tools to ascertain students' learning needs, and devising interventions for students at three tiers. In Tier 1, the classroom teacher differentiates instruction to meet all of his or her students' needs; in Tier 2, teachers begin targeting their interventions to meet the needs of those students not met in Tier 1 (e.g., through small group work and systematic push-in and pull-out strategies); and in Tier 3, teachers call on the expertise of others and practice one-on-one interventions for the remaining few. The presenters emphasize the role of collaborative teamwork and instruct participants on how to make their meetings purposeful and effective. Interviews and classroom footage illustrate how constructive PLCs and PRTI has been for all parties invested in the mission of helping all students achieve at the highest levels possible.

### Presenters' Bios

**Austin Buffum**, EdD, has 38 years of experience in public schools. His many roles include serving as former senior deputy superintendent of the Capistrano Unified School District in California. Dr. Buffum has presented in over 400 school districts throughout the country and around the world. He delivers trainings and presentations on Pyramid Response to Intervention. This tiered approach to RTI is centered on Professional Learning Communities at Work™ concepts and strategies to ensure every student receives the time and support necessary to succeed. Dr. Buffum also delivers workshops and presentations that provide the tools educators need to build and sustain PLCs.

**Mike Mattos** is recognized throughout North America for his work in the areas of response to intervention and professional learning communities. He is coauthor of the best-selling book *Pyramid Response to Intervention: RTI, Professional Learning Communities, and How to Respond When Kids Don't Learn*,



which was a 2009 finalist for the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Association of Educational Publishers. Mike is former principal of both Marjorie Veeh Elementary School and Pioneer Middle School in Tustin, California. At these schools, Mike used RTI and PLC practices to create a collaborative environment among his staff and improve learning for all students.

**Chris Weber**, EdD, is a consultant and administrative coach for Chicago Public Schools and the Oakland (California) Unified School District. He delivers trainings and presentations on Pyramid Response to Intervention. This tiered approach to RTI is centered on Professional Learning Community at Work™ concepts and strategies to ensure every student receives the time and support necessary to succeed. Dr. Weber also delivers workshops and presentations that provide the tools educators need to build and sustain PLCs.

### **Course Objectives**

After completing this course, educators will know:

- A systematic process that ensures every child receives the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels
- The essential elements of PRTI
- How professional learning community practices create the foundation needed to successfully implement PRTI
- How to align site interventions to the characteristics of highly effective interventions

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, educators will apply the following skills:

- Facilitate a professional learning community in their school or district
- Locate and utilize universal screen tools to ascertain students' needs
- Devise appropriate interventions at each of three tiers
- Monitor student progress and revise interventions accordingly
- Conduct productive team meetings

#### **Unit 1: Introduction**

In this unit, presenter Mike Mattos establishes context for pyramid response to intervention by discussing what questions a school or district needs to ask in order to best serve its students. He presents some disturbing statistics about what happens to children who don't receive an appropriate 21<sup>st</sup> century education, but then introduces a critical formula that can help educators meet all students' learning needs.



## Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Why pyramid response to intervention is necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- An exemplary mission for 21<sup>st</sup> century education

## Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Ask and answer the right questions to ensure all students' learning
- Articulate a mission statement for themselves as educators
- Use the formula: targeted instruction + time = learning

## eBook: How Does Your Current Practice Align to RTI?

Participants read chapters 1 and 2 in their eBook and then fill out the chart on p. 172, titled “How Do Our School’s Current Practices Align with the Essential Elements of RTI?” They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

## Unit 2: Building the Foundation: RTI and PLCs

In this unit, presenter Austin Buffum discusses the critical role of professional learning communities (PLCs) as the foundation for RTI. He illustrates how PLCs—defined by a focus on learning and collaboration and driven by results—create a culture that facilitates RTI.

## Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What constitutes a professional learning community
- How to facilitate a professional learning community in schools and districts

## Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Establish their education community as a professional learning community



- Utilize the PLC as a foundation for RTI

### **eBook: Creating a PLC Foundation**

Participants read chapter 4 in their eBook and then complete the chart on p.175, titled “Creating a PLC Foundation.” They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

### **Unit 3: Why Adopt an RTI Model?**

In this unit, presenter Mike Mattos foregrounds how the traditional special education model fails students; in its place, he argues, RTI reforms that model. He lays the groundwork for the adoption of a pyramid RTI model that assists educators in helping all of their students learn.

#### **Objectives**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The dangers of the traditional special education model for students
- RTI as a reformed model for meeting students’ needs

#### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Assess the shortcomings of the traditional special education model
- Embrace RTI as reform

### **eBook: Why RTI?**

Participants read chapter 3 in your eBook and complete the chart on p 173 titled “How Will Our School Respond to Key RTI Questions?” They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

### **Unit 4: What is RTI?**

In this unit, presenter Mike Mattos describes response to intervention CPR—i.e., interventions marked by



a sense of urgency, informed by research, directive, timely, targeted, administered by professionals, and systematic.

### **Objective**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What makes interventions most effective

### **Student Learning Outcome**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Employ response to intervention CPR

## **eBook: Evidence of RTI**

Participants review chapter 3 in their eBook and complete the chart on p.174, titled “What Elements of RTI Are Present in the Pioneering Models.” They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

## **Unit 5: Why a Pyramid?**

In this unit, presenter Austin Buffum details the components of the pyramid response to intervention model. He describes what Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions look like and how they can benefit all students.

### **Objectives**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The essential components of the pyramid response to intervention model
- Characteristics of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Distinguish between Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions
- Assess which students need which interventions when



### **eBook: The Pyramid**

Participants read chapters 6, 7, and 8 in their eBook and complete the charts on pp 188 – 190, titled, “What Is Our Tier 1 Core Program,” “What Are Our Tier 2 Supplemental Interventions,” and “What Are Our Tier 3 Intensive Interventions,” respectively. They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

### **Unit 6: A Systematic Response, Part 1**

In this unit, presenter Chris Weber offers the first half of the details of a systematic response to intervention—i.e., one that works through the first three stages of identifying students, determining students’ needs, and monitoring their progress.

#### **Objective**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What systematic response to intervention looks like in a classroom, school, or district

#### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Locate and utilize universal screening tools to identify students
- Determine students’ needs

### **eBook: Systematic Responses, Part 1**

Participants read chapter 11 in their eBook and answers the questions on pp. 197-198 to the best of their ability. They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

### **Unit 7: A Systematic Response, Part 2**

In this unit, Chris Weber continues his inquiry into what constitutes systematic response to intervention. He explores the last three stages of continued progress monitoring, revision of supports as necessary, and extension of the curriculum for students ready to move forward.

#### **Objective**



After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What systematic RTI looks like in the classroom, school, or district

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Monitor students' progress
- Revise supports as necessary
- Extend the curriculum

### **eBook: Systematic Responses, Part 2**

Participants re-read chapter 11 in their eBook and answers the questions on pp. 197-198 to the best of their ability. They present the conclusions they reach as a result of the exercise in reflection questions and in the discussion forum.

### **Unit 8: Examining the Models**

In this unit, Austin Buffum completes this course by looking at model pyramid response to intervention programs and strategies on the elementary, middle, and high school levels. He details the interventions those programs offer and how to implement and sustain them through collaborative teamwork.

#### **Objective**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Three model pyramid response to intervention programs

#### **Student Learning Outcome**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Model their own pyramid RTI on successful programs implemented in other schools and districts

### **eBook: The Models**

Participants review the sample pyramids available under Resources in the eClassroom and explain in



reflection questions and in the discussion forum which would best serve as models for their schools and why. Participants may propose alterations to the model or combine ideas from several models, as they see fit.

### **Methods of Instruction**

- Videos (presentations consisting of lecture, interviews, and classroom footage)
- eBook (chapters and exercises from the eBook)
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the video presentations where participants are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations and eBook content)

### **Plagiarism Policy**

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org).

### **Passing Requirements:**

In order to complete the requirements of the course, the participant must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, quizzes, and any midterm and/or final), including watching all videos and participating in all discussion forums. We do not award partial credit.

- Quizzes 40% of total grade
- Reflection Questions 60% of total grade





**KDS Self-Assessment Rubric:**

	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>	100% Correct	80% Correct	60% Correct	0-40% Correct

	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Reflection Questions</b>	Participant provides rich detail from the content of the course in his or her responses Participant makes his or her responses to the questions personally meaningful	Participant includes appropriate content from the course in his or her responses Participant makes thoughtful comments in direct response to the questions	Participant includes some content from the course, usually appropriate, in his or her responses Participant answers the questions directly, not always fully	Participant includes no content from the course in his or her responses Participant does not address the questions posed