

## Response to Intervention: A Handout for Parents

There are many possible reasons why students struggle with the demands of school and begin to fall behind their peers in academics or show behavior problems. In an effort to accommodate the learning needs of those students who experience school difficulties, schools across the nation are implementing an approach called *Response to Intervention* or RTI. RTI is a flexible problem-solving model in which schools provide assistance to match the learner's needs. The Cobb County School District has adopted the model developed by the Georgia Department of Education that organizes school intervention services into four levels, or *Tiers*.

Students with emerging difficulties in school are first given *Tier 1*, universal support. If that help is not sufficient, they are next provided with *Tier 2*, more targeted interventions. If sufficient progress is not evident the student may move on to *Tier 3* for more intensive interventions. Students with significant school delays who do not respond to Tier 3 may be eligible for special education.

***Tier 1:*** These supports are those academic and behavioral strategies that all teachers routinely use at the first sign that a student is having problems in their classrooms.

***Tier 2:*** If the student is not making adequate progress towards grade level standards despite classroom supports, the teacher may refer the child to the school's Response to Intervention (RTI) team to collaborate with other professionals and provide research-based strategies. The RTI team identifies student's strengths and weaknesses as well as reasons why a student is experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties. A practical, research-based plan to address those student concerns is developed and implemented. Data is collected to monitor progress.

***Tier 3:*** If data provided by the Tier 2 team indicates the student is not making adequate progress in response to the intervention(s), a referral is made to Tier 3 RTI team for more individual, intensive intervention. Data is collected to monitor progress. At this time, the RTI team meets with the parent(s) to share data and collect more detailed information about the child.

***Referral to Special Education:*** If the RTI team determines after trying several individualized intervention plans that a student has not made sufficient progress, the school may refer the student to special education. During the referral process, students may need to go through a formal evaluation process, which includes specialized testing. The team then determines if they meet eligibility requirements for special education services due to a need for specialized instruction.

You are welcome to contact your child's teacher, school counselor, or a school administrator if you have concerns about your child's academic performance or would like to know more about the RTI process.

# Pyramid of Intervention

## **Tier 1: Performance Based Instruction for ALL students:**

*Standards based curriculum*  
*Research-based practices and strategies*  
*Differentiated instruction*  
*Effective classroom management*  
*Guided by progress monitoring and balanced assessment*  
*Planned to address developmental domains (academic, communication/language, social/emotional, etc.)*

## **Tier 2: Targeted Interventions**

*Standard intervention protocols*  
*Problem solving process & data analysis*  
*Tailored to student needs*  
*Enhanced opportunities for extended learning*  
*Targeted small groups and selected individuals*  
*Includes more frequent progress monitoring*  
*Planned to address developmental domains (academic, communication/language, social/emotional, etc.)*

## **Tier 3: Intensive Interventions**

*Individualized – refine and intensify*  
*More in-depth assessment & data analysis*  
*Strategies & interventions tailored to specific needs*  
*Consideration for referral to special education and/or other programs only when data indicates a need*