

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 *Tier 4*, 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. As examples of Tier 1 supports, teachers may change their method of instruction, provide a child with additional individual help, or check the child's homework each day.

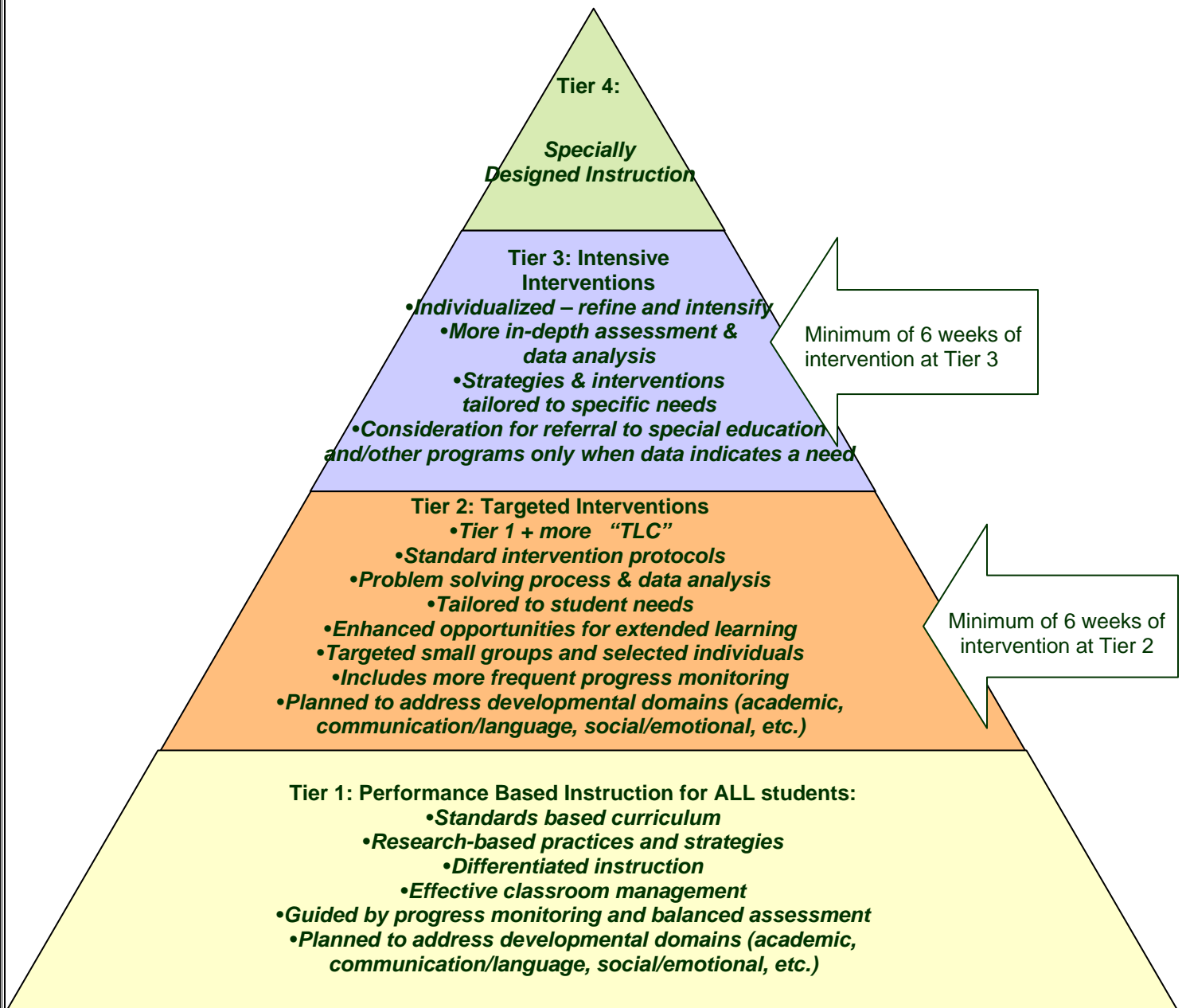
Tier 2: If the student continues to fall behind peers despite classroom supports, the teacher may refer the child to the school's Response to Intervention (RTI) team to collaborate with other professionals and provide further enhanced strategies.

Tier 3: If data provided by the Tier 2 team shows continued problems, further support is requested through Tier 3. At this point the RTI team contacts the student's parent(s) and meets with the teacher to collect more detailed information about the child. With that information, the team and teacher identify possible reasons why a student is experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties and put together a practical, research-based plan to address those student problems. The classroom teacher may carry out the intervention plan alone or other school staff may assist. While the intervention plan is in action, the team monitors the student's progress.

Tier 4: If the RTI team finds after trying several individualized intervention plans that a student still has not made sufficient progress, the school may refer the student for Tier 4, special education. Students may need to go through a formal evaluation process, including specialized testing, to determine if they qualify for these services.

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 Interventions



Georgia Department of Education RTI Handbook and parent resources.

http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_services.aspx