

Introduction and Overview

Response to Intervention (RTI) is at the core of school improvement-- to make sure we reach *all* students, especially those whose academic skills or behaviors are not up to expectations. This movement, now common practice in all states, came about in an unusual way: *from the bottom up*. That is, it is not a top-down federal or state program authored by elected representatives, government officials or education mavens, and it is not new. It is a grassroots effort based on a set of hard-won proven practices for successfully addressing the hardest to reach students, which has been gradually crafted by trial and error for at least 25 years. Its identity is a building level atmosphere, culture and level of expectation that every student's needs are the work and responsibility of every teacher and staff member, and that the RTI process is the framework to address those needs. Its purpose is to find out at the beginning of each year which students are not succeeding and begin to use increasingly intensive research based interventions until we either remediate them in the general classroom setting or in a classroom with specially trained teachers for specially designed instruction in conjunction with the regular classroom curriculum.

The federal or state government did not provide us with a RTI process that was a fully formed program and mandate its use. After many local systems across the nation began achieving markedly improved success with an RTI approach, the US Department of Education eventually recognized the inevitable and started making room for these practices in federal programs. Suffice it to say that now it would be hard to find a system where at least a minimum of RTI processes are not being used. We in Georgia have already had the essence of RTI present in our SST functioning in each public school since 1984, so the maturing science of RTI has conveniently subsumed and fitted to our SST and applied the principles at every level of education.

Response to Intervention (RTI): The Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions graphically illustrates the process of aligning appropriate assessment with purposeful instruction for all students. In Georgia, Response to Intervention is based in the general education classroom where teachers routinely implement a strong and rigorous standards-based learning environment. The tiered approach to providing layers of intervention for students needing support requires a school wide common understanding of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS), timely assessment practices, and appropriate instructional pedagogy.

Georgia's RTI process includes several key components:

- A 4-Tier delivery model designed to provide support matched to student need through the implementation of standards-based classrooms.
- Evidence-based instruction as the core of classroom pedagogy.
- Evidence-based interventions of increasing levels of intensity based on progress monitoring.
- The use of a variety of ongoing assessment data to determine which students are not meeting success academically and/or behaviorally.
- Data Teams in each school serve as the driving force for instructional decision making in the building.
- Purposeful allocation of instructional resources based on student assessment data.

All students participate in general education learning. Students requiring interventions to meet individual learning expectations will receive support through a systematic and purposeful process. The number of students requiring interventions will decrease as the level of intensity of the intervention increases. Specific information on the 4-Tier delivery model is located in this document starting at Chapter 4.