



## Responsiveness to Instruction in North Carolina: A Handout for Parents

### What is Responsiveness to Instruction?

The NC Department of Public Instruction has developed a problem-solving process to meet the needs of students called **Responsiveness to Instruction (RTI)** for use in North Carolina schools. Currently, school systems across NC are in various stages of RTI implementation and may even use a different name for RTI (e.g., Response to Intervention, Intervention Alignment, etc.). Still, in all cases, this process assists parents and teachers who need help with developing educational solutions for problems that arise with students in schools. Being informed about your school's RTI process is the first step to becoming an active partner.



**Responsiveness  
to Instruction**

### What are “Tiers” and what do they mean?

Problem-solving typically occurs on a continuum of four different levels, called “tiers” (if your child's school is using a three-tiered approach, then Tier Two and Tier Three are combined):

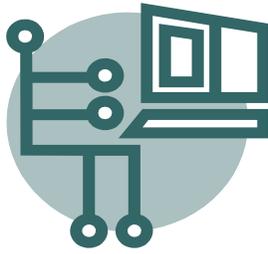
**Tier One** Student concerns are addressed by informal parent and teacher conferences.

**Tier Two** There are times when additional building staff is needed to address concerns. These concerns are addressed through informal consultation with additional professionals, to elicit their support, services and/or recommendations for an instructional plan.

**Tier Three** If the problem requires more specialized assessment and input, formal consultation with a “Problem-



*Various levels or “tiers”  
are utilized to incorporate  
specialized strategies into  
your child's learning and  
RTI encourages parent  
participation at all tiers.*



**Problem-solving  
processes**

Solving Team” may be warranted. The planning, documentation, and data collection is very specific. The school’s Problem-Solving Team will be primarily responsible for directing activities at this tier.

**Tier Four** Through the process of problem-solving, it may become clear that additional resources and services are needed to address the student concern. At this point special education services may be considered. Parents may be asked to sign for permission to evaluate their child to determine the eligibility and need for special education services.

## Key Terms

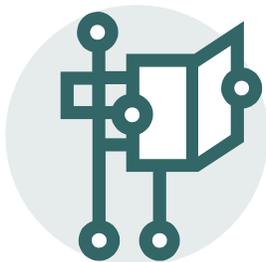
**Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI)** is an array of procedures that can be used to determine if and how students respond to specific changes in instruction. RTI provides an improved process and structure for school teams in designing, implementing, and evaluating educational interventions.

**Universal Screening** is a step taken by school personnel early in the school year to determine which students are “at risk” for not meeting grade level standards or those who have behavioral or emotional problems that may interfere with their learning. Universal screening can be accomplished by reviewing recent results of state tests, or by administering an academic or behavioral screening test to all students in a given grade level. Those students whose test scores or screening results fall below a certain cut-off are identified as needing more specialized academic or behavioral interventions.

**Progress Monitoring** is a scientifically based practice that is used to frequently assess students’ academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring procedures can be used with individual students or an entire class.

**Evidence-Based Interventions** include instructional methods that are of high quality and have been shown by research to be effective (research-based). This means that the instructional methods that the teachers are using are known to work well.

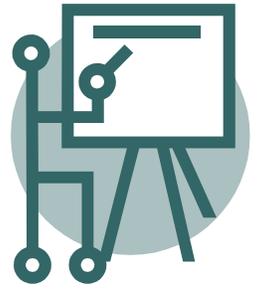
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**Evidence-Based  
Interventions**

## Benefits of RTI

Perhaps the most commonly cited benefit of an RTI approach is that it eliminates a “wait to fail” situation because students get help promptly within the general education setting. Secondly, an RTI approach has the potential to reduce the number of students referred for special education services while increasing the number of students who are successful within regular education. Since an RTI approach helps distinguish between those students whose achievement problems are due to a learning disability and those students whose achievement problems are due to other issues such as lack of prior instruction, referrals for special education evaluations are often reduced. RTI can reduce the likelihood that students from diverse racial, cultural or linguistic backgrounds are incorrectly identified as having a disability. Finally, parents and school teams alike find that the student progress monitoring helps teachers and parents determine the effectiveness of the evidence based intervention of instructional changes.



**Why are schools using RTI?**

## Assuring Student Success by Working Together

The involvement of parents in the education and decision making of their child is critical. With RTI, there is an approach and a commitment to the involvement of parents from the very start of the process. Providing parents with frequent feedback using data and involving them in decisions is critical. By working collaboratively with one another we can provide the best possible opportunities for our children and youth while assuring that difficulties are resolved in an effective and efficient manner. If you have concerns about your child’s learning or behavior, please contact your child’s teacher.

*“The involvement of parents in the education and decision making of their child is critical.”*

## Information adapted from:

Klotz, M., Canter A., *Response to Intervention: A Primer for Parents* © 2007, National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 EastWest Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814, (301) 657-0270.

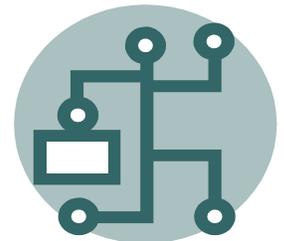
NORTH CAROLINA *Working Together for Children: A Guide for Parents and Teachers* <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/curriculum/responsiveness/guide.pdf>

*A Parent’s Guide to Response-to-Intervention, National Center for Learning Disabilities • www.LD.org*

Mellard, D., McKnight, M., Deshler, D. *The ABCs of RTI (2007). National Research Center on Learning Disabilities.*

Heartland AEA, Iowa

Horry County Schools, SC.



**Education for all.**