

# Response to Intervention

## RTI



*What Families and Educators Need To Know*

"The way schools care about children is reflected in the way schools care about the children's families.

If educators view children simply as students, they are likely to see the family as separate from the school. That is, the family is expected to do its job and leave the education of children to the schools.

If educators view students as children, they are likely to see both the family and the community as partners with the school in children's education and development. Partners recognize their shared interest in and responsibilities for children, and they work together to create better programs and opportunities for students."

Dr. Joyce Epstein, "Caring for the Children We Share"

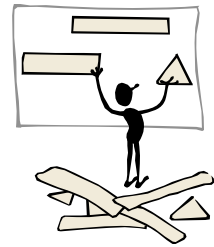
Parents Reaching Out is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs as the Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC) for New Mexico. The contents of this publication were developed under the grant in collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department. This booklet also supports the activities of the Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

# Welcome

Families share a common dream—success for our children! Success will be different for each child because each child has unique gifts and needs. We want our children to learn. We want our children to have healthy, positive caring experiences and grow up to become capable young adults who contribute and participate in their communities. When the adults in their lives (family members, educators, and others) form strong partnerships, our children will get the most out of every learning experience.

Things are changing in our schools today. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) require more accountability for schools to provide high quality instruction for **all children**. Schools can't do this alone. Families and school staff must now work together to make informed, data-based decisions to plan quality programs for every child in every school.

Good instruction is not “guesswork”. Good instruction is not based on fads or brand new textbooks or “we’ve always done it this way”. High quality instruction is about finding out what works for each child and putting it into action! *We can make a difference for our children by doing things differently!*



The definition of *insanity* is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting *different results*. ~Albert Einstein

## About This Book . . .

*We cannot continue to wait for students to fail before we get them the help they need!* We must take action when children first begin to struggle with academics or challenging behaviors that interfere with learning.

We developed this book to help families and others understand the process that is required for schools to make sound decisions to improve outcomes for **all** students. This process is called: **Response to Intervention (RTI)**. Yes, one more abbreviation that we need to learn. We'll use these letters—**RTI** as we talk about *Response to Intervention* in this book. The Tools section of this book includes more acronyms, RTI resources and other information.

NCLB and IDEA 2004 call for early intervention strategies with family involvement to improve the academic and functional outcomes of students. Schools are expected to use scientifically based and system wide approaches that promote achievement and social competence for all children. *Each child comes to school with different strengths, interests and needs.* Students learn when the curriculum and instructional strategies make a good fit between their skills and abilities. If there is a poor fit, both child outcomes and learning suffers.

Using the **Response to Intervention (RTI)** process, schools monitor student progress. When students struggle with learning or behaviors that interfere with learning, schools must take a scientific approach to find *and* use strategies that will work for the student. Simply put, if one strategy is not working, try a different one. *Let's learn about RTI and how this process works.*

## What is Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI is a *process not a place* that schools use to help children who are struggling. This process is based on the possibility that these struggles may be due to inadequacies or consistency in instruction, language proficiency or in the curriculum—used now or in the child’s past. It is not a “quick fix” or a *one size fits all* solution. RTI looks at how students are making progress with the current instruction in the classroom to find more effective ways to help students make academic and functional progress during their school experiences.

RTI requires that families and educators work together to discover not only what works for our children, but also what does not work and may contribute to school failure. RTI identifies struggling learners early to prevent the cycle of failure that impacts our children—not only in school, but in life beyond the school years. RTI increases the likelihood that children can be successful and maintain their class placement in the general education setting. *The key elements of RTI include:*

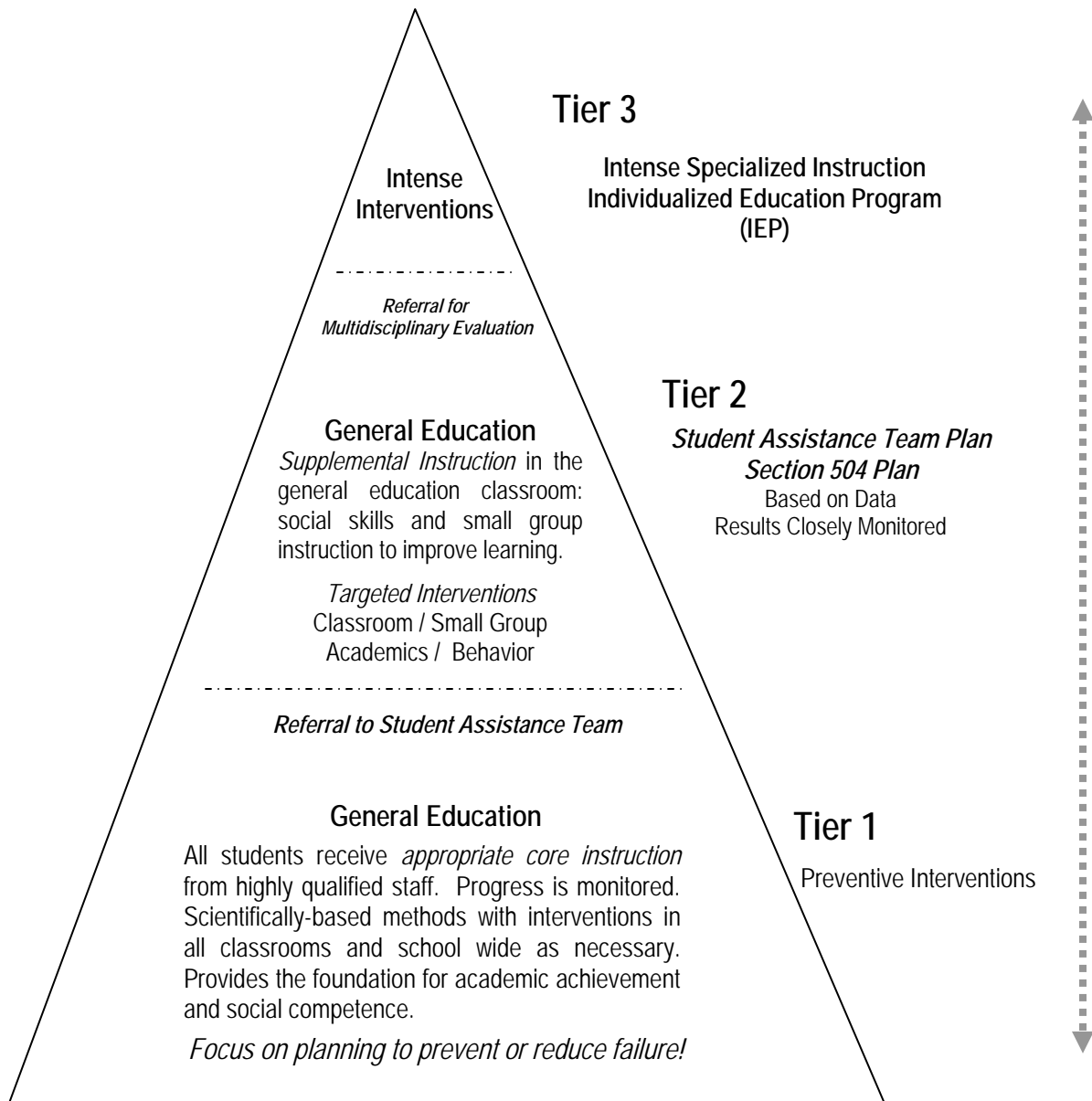


- School staff make consistent efforts to welcome families as partners and decision-makers in their child’s education and all processes.
- Children receive *appropriate* instruction in the general education setting. \*The term *appropriate* means that, whenever possible, methods and materials should be founded in research that shows they have been proven to work effectively. Although the areas of reading and math have been researched for years, research is not yet available for every behavioral and educational context.
- General education instructors and staff take an active role in assessing children’s progress in that curriculum.
- School staff conduct universal screening of children in the areas of academics and behavior, as well as health and general well-being
- Child performance is continuously monitored as a routine part of the general education instructional program.
- Continuous progress monitoring is used to pinpoint children’s specific difficulties.
- School staff implement specific, research-based interventions to address the child’s difficulties that have been identified.
- School staff use progress-monitoring data to assess the effectiveness of each intervention. They also use this data to make any modifications as needed.
- Systematic assessment is completed to insure that instruction and interventions are implemented with fidelity or integrity.

When schools implement RTI, struggling children are identified through classroom, school-wide, and district-wide screening processes as well as other means, such as teacher observation or parent concern. By taking these steps, the school can ensure that an RTI process is faithfully implemented to provide the child with appropriate interventions while the child is still in the general education environment.

## Get the Picture: RTI Improves Outcomes for Students in NM!

Student success is linked to the academic and behavioral systems that are in place for all students. This three-tiered approach is also called the *Response to Intervention (RTI)* model. The picture below shows this planned support system that promotes student learning, skills for social competence, and effective teaching for *all* students. The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) divides Tier 2 into smaller layers with more opportunities to provide students what they need when they need it. (See page 5 of this book.)



*Think about this process like the steps we may practice for our health care.*

We might start with practicing good health with rest, exercise, and a proper diet (Tier 1).

At times, we might need a physical exam and special medical interventions (Tier 2).

Finally, some of us might need individualized treatment, therapy, or surgery (Tier 3).

## ***What will the RTI Tiered Process Mean for My Child?***

The strategies in each Tier of the *RTI process* have different levels of intensity.

**Tier 1** *Universal strategies* to build a strong foundation for all students. All students receive appropriate instruction geared to content standards and benchmarks set by the NM Public Education Department (NMPED) from highly qualified staff. (General Education) **This is called CORE instruction with the CORE curriculum that the school district has carefully chosen to teach their students. *Supplemental Instruction*** may also take place in the general education classroom with smaller groups of students. The district has often given teachers interventions to try with students who have had problems with CORE instruction.

**Tier 2** Tier 2 consists of ***Targeted, Individualized Interventions*** with research-based strategies for students who are struggling and/or have been identified “at-risk” for school failure. Interventions for these students generally take place within the regular classroom in one or more areas through a Student Assistance Team (SAT) Intervention Plan designed by the SAT\*. Interventions may also be provided through school programs with small group instruction by qualified staff as described in the SAT intervention plan

\* The NM Public Education Department uses the term Student Assistance Team (SAT) for the *child study process* required by law. Other states may use terms like:

- Child Study Team (CST):
- Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)
- Schoolwide Support Team (SST)
- Early Intervening Team or
- School (or School-wide) Assistance Team



A child who does not respond to the first level of classroom or school-wide interventions should be referred to the Student Assistance Team (SAT)\*. Tier 2 progress is more closely monitored to see if the child *responds to interventions*. This monitoring period is generally longer and more specific—a marking period, for instance, rather than six weeks. Results are reviewed by the SAT. When compared to grade level peers in the district, if the child shows adequate progress, we know that the intervention has been successful. A “match” has been found as to what type of instruction works with that child. When learning or behavior problems are caught early enough and addressed through appropriate instruction, a child has the opportunity to learn skills to continue in the classroom without further intervention.

**Tier 3** *Intense individual interventions and specialized instruction* based on child-centered needs are provided in addition to universal strategies and targeted interventions. If the child *does not* respond adequately to significant Tier 2 interventions, then a third level becomes an option for continued and even more intensive intervention. This third level is typically highly individualized and provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Students that are referred to **Tier 3** require a multidisciplinary evaluation to determine their need for services.

The **Book of Ideas** features interventions to improve student outcomes. Contact Parents Reaching Out (1-800-524-5176) or visit [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org) to download a copy.

# Response to Intervention for New Mexico Schools

**Table 3: Levels of Intervention Intensity Matrix**

	Low Intensity		High Intensity		
	Tier I: Regular Education		Tier II: Regular Education with Supplemental Services if appropriate		Tier III: Special Education
	1	2	3	4	5
Program Emphasis	Use core program and explicitly teach priority skills	Use extensions of the core program	Supplement core with re-teaching or intervention components of core	Replace current core program with intervention program	Implement specially designed program (IEP)
Time (Opportunity to Learn)	Schedule and deliver 60-90 minutes of daily instruction (minimum of 30 minutes in small group)	Increase opportunities to respond during core instruction	Schedule core + supplemental period (90+30 or 60+30)	Schedule two intervention sessions daily (no less than 90 minutes total)	Implement specially designed program (IEP)
Grouping for Instruction	Check group placement and provide combination of whole and small-group instruction	Schedule small-group opportunity for specific practice	Reduce group size down to three students or less	Provide individualized instruction	Implement specially designed program (IEP)
Assessment	Student Work Samples (SWS) NM Standards-Based Assessments (NMSBA) Short-Cycle Assessments		SWS NMSBA Short-Cycle Assessments Curriculum-Based Measures (CBMs)		SWS NMSBA Short-Cycle Assessments CBMs Diagnostic Tests

NMPED Response to Intervention: A Systematic Process to Increase Learning Outcomes for All Students December 2006

To download the entire RTI manual, SAT manual and other technical assistance documents, visit the NM Public Education Department (NMPED) website: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/parents.students>

## How Will RTI Make a Difference?

As families and educators, it helps to understand how the Response to Intervention (RTI) process became a part of the laws that guide what happens in our schools. Here are a few reasons:

1. Researchers discovered that nearly 50% of students that were receiving special education services did not really have a disability. Special education was becoming the “cure” for poor instruction for some students in our schools. Researchers found that these students had never received scientific-based instruction that had been implemented with fidelity.
2. It was discovered that nearly all of the students who were misidentified for special education services were classified as having a learning disability. The original thought behind RTI was to prevent the misidentification of students as learning disabled.
3. *Now we know that the RTI process just makes sense for all students in every situation. **Simply put, it means that we need to do what is right to make sure that every child in our schools is getting the most out of every learning experience.*** Schools and families must work together to evaluate what is being done and if it is not working—if our children are not showing progress—we need to use other strategies.
4. School outcomes data show that as a whole, students do better in the general education classroom with peers. RTI provides options and supports for partnerships that will foster opportunities for students to receive their education in more inclusive settings.
5. The goal of the RTI process is to prevent students from being *mislabeled* as a student with a disability. RTI is designed to insure all students are exposed to *appropriate* instruction administered by highly qualified staff. RTI is not just about academics. RTI includes behavior, skills for social competence, and functional independence.

### ***Benefits of Response to Intervention***

When schools implement an RTI process, general educators are the primary interveners with special educators and other support staff as members of the problem-solving teams for Tier 1 and Tier 2. In Tier 3, or the most intense tier, special educators are generally the primary interveners. Interventions may be provided through general education by specialists like a reading teacher or behavior interventionist. Families should be partners in the RTI process and informed in writing of their rights when a student is first identified as at-risk or is struggling to meet expected intervention response rates. Communication and teamwork in the RTI process improve results for *all* students. When implemented with fidelity on a school-wide basis, the RTI process will:

- Reduce the time a student waits before receiving additional instructional assistance (for academics, behavior, or functional living skills), including special education if needed;
- Reduce the overall number of students referred for special education services and increase the number of students who succeed within general education;
- Provide critical information about the instructional needs of the student, which can be used to create effective educational and behavioral interventions;
- Limit the amount of unnecessary testing that has little or no instructional relevance; and
- Ensure that students receive appropriate instruction prior to referral for and/or placement in special education.



## ***What is SAT and how does it utilize the RTI process?***

The Response to Intervention (RTI) model guides Student Assistance Teams (SATs) in New Mexico schools to successfully meet the needs of all students. This model of student intervention is required in current state regulations NMAC 6.31.2.10 (C)(1)-(3). The Student Assistance Team (SAT) is a school-based group of people who work with the classroom teacher and families to provide additional Tier 2 support to students who are experiencing difficulties that prevent them from benefiting from their education. These students may be performing below or above expectations. By “catching” these students in the *child study phase*, the SAT may not only help the student be able to remain and succeed in the classroom, but also reduce unnecessary referrals to special education. The SAT’s mission is to approach and arrive at appropriate solutions to problems in the school environment through a cooperative team effort. Although the team may make referrals to special education and other special programs, the SAT is not part of the special education process, but rather a *general education responsibility*.

The SAT addresses problems found through universal screening or those brought up as concerns by parents, teachers, or other staff. The SAT designs and recommends interventions for those students who show need for individual consideration. Interventions are focused on using student strengths that may alleviate or resolve the situation prior to referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation. In many cases, the SAT is able to assist students who need interventions in order to succeed, but who are not necessarily disabled and therefore do not qualify for special education or Section 504 accommodations. Simply put, the SAT is a “support group” for the regular education teachers and students in need.

## ***What about RTI for children with disabilities who receive special education services?***

The use of an RTI process with children who are struggling in school naturally raises questions regarding its use with children with disabilities who are receiving special education and related services. When asked if children with disabilities would be eligible to receive services using RTI strategies, the US Department of Education responded:

Response to intervention (RTI) strategies are tools that enable educators to target instructional interventions to children’s areas of specific need as soon as those needs become apparent. There is nothing in IDEA that prohibits children with disabilities who are receiving special education and related services under IDEA from receiving instruction using RTI strategies unless the use of such strategies is inconsistent with their... IEPs.

(U.S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 2)

Parents Reaching Out recommends that if your child has an IEP, your first step is to work with members of your child’s IEP team to identify the intervention strategies to address your child’s needs. If your child previously had a SAT plan, the interventions from that plan that were successful might be helpful for the IEP team to know about as they develop the IEP. It makes great sense to consider all of the options. Special education teachers, related service providers and regular education teachers provide Tier 3 interventions that are specially-designed instruction with supplementary aids and services. In New Mexico, once a student is eligible for Tier III—special education, the IEP team drives the education program. SAT has no further responsibility or interaction until child is exited from Special Education. For more information on the Special Education process, call Parents Reaching Out.

## RTI Practices

RTI practices are not limited to a specific subject area of the school curriculum. It is important to remember that the Response to Intervention (RTI) process is designed *to improve outcomes for all students*—in subject areas like reading, math, and science, as well as functional areas such as social competence, daily living, transition to post-secondary education, and employment.

- School-wide screening / Short-cycle assessments  
The school gives all students a screening test (short-cycle assessment)—several times each year so that the teachers and support staff will know which students will need extra help with academic work or behavior.
- Progress monitoring  
For students needing extra help, school staff members frequently check the progress of each child to see what changes, if any, need to be made to instruction. Depending upon the intervention strategy, progress is monitored at least every two weeks.
- Tiered intervention  
The RTI structure includes three tiers, or levels, of intervention. Tier 1 or 2, are general education responsibilities, Tier 3 is special education with specially-designed instruction. Each level of support increases the intensity of instruction.
- High quality, appropriate instruction / interventions  
All school staff members use *appropriate* instructional methods and materials that have been proven to work effectively.
- Collaboration among school staff members  
School staff members (principal, general education teachers, special education teachers, reading specialists, support staff, etc.) work together to help each child be successful.
- Fidelity of implementation  
School staff members make sure that the instructional materials, methods, and intervention strategies are used exactly as intended over time.



We have adapted information from the *ABCs of RTI* (D. Mellard, M McKnight, D. Deshler; 2007, National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, [www.nrcltd@ku.edu](http://www.nrcltd@ku.edu)) to show examples of these practices and questions that you may want ask schools. The examples on pages 8-14 focus on reading because it is often called a gateway skill for school success and future employment opportunities. *What skills does your child needs to become successful in life?*

*Is there a time expectation for Tier 2 interventions?* Yes. The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) recommends a time line of no more than 18 weeks with progress monitoring every two weeks to try different scientific strategies through the SAT process. If a method works then that method may be used as long as needed. If methods do not work with in the 18 week period, then it is time to refer to a more intense type of intervention.

*Can families request Special Education evaluation regardless of the SAT process and time line?* Yes. As a matter of best practice, Parents Reaching Out does not recommend families circumventing the process unless they can document the different strategies that have been tried over a specific time period.

## **Universal Screening**

To find out if a child needs extra help, schools use what is known as universal, or school-wide, screening. Some schools look at the results of yearly national, state and/or district tests. Other schools give all children (all grades) screening tests early in the year, again in the middle and at the end of the school year. Some schools do both. It is not unusual for schools to find that one out of every five children could benefit from some sort of extra help. Schools are happy to know early in the year which students need help so that teachers can begin helping them right away.

One type of screening test for students in kindergarten and first grade quickly measures how well a student understands the sounds that letters make within a word. Teachers have found that students who have a good understanding of sounds and letters will be more successful in learning to read than students who don't have that same understanding. Another type of screening test for students who know how to read asks students to read a paragraph or story. The teacher checks to see how many correct words the student reads in one minute. Scores on this type of test give teachers a good idea of whether or not the child is having difficulties in reading.

Teachers also like to check to see how well students understand what they read. If students have a good understanding of what they read, we say that they have good reading comprehension. Your child should take screening tests that check reading comprehension, because, after all, the goal of reading is to understand the words!

### **A Brief Visit to Feynman Elementary School**

#### ***Checking Oral Fluency Rates***

Morgan is in third grade. In mid-September, Morgan and her classmates were given individual screening tests. The teacher listened to Morgan read part of a story for one minute and then figured out how many words she read correctly during that time. The number of correct words read in one minute is the oral reading fluency rate. Morgan had an oral fluency rate of 87 correct words per minute. This is a good oral fluency rate for a child at the beginning of third grade and means that Morgan is probably not having trouble with reading.

Maren, also in third grade, had an oral fluency rate of 48 correct words per minute. This score of 48 lets the teacher know that Maren may need some extra help with reading.

### **What to find out about screening**

- What tests does the school use to screen students for reading problems?
- Does the school do screening tests for reading comprehension?
- What kinds of information do the screening tests give?
- Why is it important to have this kind of information?
- What are your child's reading scores from the screening tests?
- Does my child need extra help? What kind of help?
- How does my child's progress compare expected grade level progress and other children's progress in the same class?



## Progress Monitoring

It is not uncommon for children to need extra help with reading. For example, if a child does need extra help, the classroom teacher or another qualified staff member (ex. Title I Reading Specialist) might work with a small group of children each day or three times a week. This would be in addition to the 90 minutes of reading instruction each day. The classroom teacher will want to know just how well this additional instruction is working. Rather than just hoping for the best, the teacher use assessment information to see actual proof that the instruction is working or not working. To gather proof, the teacher will monitor, or pay close attention to each child's progress, often every other week, and will keep track of the child's progress on a chart. Keeping close track of progress is called *progress monitoring*. Teachers use the information from progress monitoring to make decisions about instruction and whether a child need to be referred to another tier for additional support.

### A Brief Visit to Feynman Elementary School

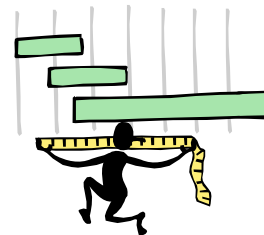
Oliver is in kindergarten, and the results of the fall screening tests show that he is having difficulty with letter sounds. Maddie, Rose, and Wes are also having trouble knowing the sounds of letters. Three times each week, their teacher gives this small group of four kindergartners extra instruction that has been shown to do a good job with helping students learn the sounds of letters. Because the teacher wants to be sure that this extra instruction is helping these students, he spends several minutes at least once each week testing each of them to see if their understanding of the sounds of letters is getting better and better each week.

After each brief test covering letters and their sounds, the teacher puts a mark on Oliver's chart to show how many letter sounds he knows at that point. (Maddie, Rose, and Wes also each have their own chart.) At the beginning of the year, Oliver could name only 6 letter sounds in one minute, but after 4 weeks of extra instruction, he could name 14 letter sounds, gaining on average 2 letter sounds per minute each week. This was good progress, and the teacher felt that he was using the right kind of instruction for Oliver.

Oliver's chart showed an increase each week in the number of letter sounds he knew. On the other hand, Rose's chart showed that she had made very little progress during the four weeks. She gained only two letter sounds per minute over 4 weeks. Her teacher, along with other school staff members, decided that another kind of instruction should be used. Both Oliver and Rose like being able to look at the charts to see how they are doing.

### What to find out about progress monitoring

- What is being used to monitor my child's progress? What short-cycle or other assessments are being used?
- What is being measured?
- How often is my child's progress being monitored?
- Do you have a chart that shows the results of the progress monitoring? May I see it?
- How is my child doing? Does the chart show that my child is making progress because of the extra instruction?
- If there is no progress, when will the instruction change?

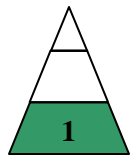


## Tiered Instruction and Intervention

*It might help families to think if RTI in two ways:*

**RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION**, academics, reading, math, science  
**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION**, functional behaviors, response to services

Instruction that occurs in tiers, or levels, is called *tiered instruction*. Using a systems approach, interventions can also be grouped in tiers according to levels of support and services. Tiered instruction and tiered intervention is usually organized into three or four tiers. In New Mexico, schools use a three-tier system of intervention. Each tier is different, with each level having an increase in intensity, or an increased number of teacher-student interactions. *Information about a student's instruction and progress during tiered instruction can also be useful in determining if the student has a learning disability and thus would be more successful in Special Education. (Special Education is considered to be the highest, and most intense, tier in the tiered system.*

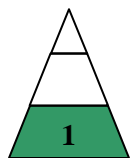


### Tier 1 (General Education)

**Response to Instruction (RTI)** Universal Screening, Appropriate Instruction, Progress Monitoring, and Universal Instructional Design for All Students.



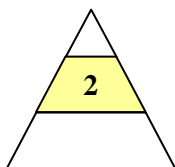
The instruction that students receive in the general education classroom, with their regular classroom teacher, is called Tier 1 instruction. All children receive this first level of reading, which usually lasts about 90 minutes each day. In some cases, when a screening test shows that a child may be at-risk for reading problems, that child receives extra help in the general education classroom with the general education teacher. If, after a brief period of time, progress monitoring shows that there has been very little progress, the teacher will consult with other staff members at the school. Together they might decide that the best way to help a child who has not improved with the general education curriculum, even with extra help, would be to refer the child for more targeted (Tier 2) instruction.



### Tier 1 (General Education-ALL STUDENTS)

**Response to Intervention (RTI)** Universal Screening, Appropriate Instruction, Progress Monitoring, and Universal Preventative Behavior Interventions

Tier 1 provides primary intervention in the form of universal screening and appropriate quality classroom instruction to *all students*. In schools implementing the school-wide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), planned universal interventions focus on all students and all settings in the school. PBS strategies are proactive and focus on preventing problem behaviors. The majority (80–90%) of school-aged students will respond successfully to quality instruction in the regular education classroom and universal school-wide positive behavior interventions at this level. A student who is either struggling to learn the standard curriculum, working beyond the standard curriculum, or having difficulty maintaining appropriate behavior in the regular education classroom or identified through universal screening procedures will be referred to Tier 2.



## Tier 2 (General Education)

**Response to Instruction (RTI) Child Study Process (Student Assistance Team) with Targeted Interventions to Address Learning and or Behavior**

*Is your child struggling with academics or experiencing challenging behaviors that interfere with his or her learning? Have you visited with the teacher to discuss your concerns? Has the teacher tried different (scientific strategies), but your child still is not showing progress? If this is the case, refer your child to the Student Assistance Team in your school. Parents and/or teachers or other support staff can make SAT referrals for Tier 2 instruction. Get help early--don't wait for your child to fail.*

**The general education teacher should try research based interventions whenever practical and keep track of the results *before* referring a child to the SAT.** The teacher may have things for you to help your with at home, too. Tier 2 instruction is more intense and is provided *in addition* to that in Tier 1 as is prescribed by the SAT after conducting the child study process. It is typically a different type of instruction or intervention given to a small group of children for 30–40 minutes each day. Small-group instruction for an additional period of time each day has many benefits for a child needing extra help. To select Tier 2 interventions, the SAT may decide that additional assessments are needed. If any tests other than those given in general screening are suggested, the team must get written parental consent.

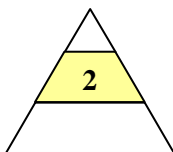
Tier 2 provides more opportunities for teachers and parents to make sure that students stay on the right track or make immediate corrections if a student gets off course. In some schools, the classroom teacher gives the small group Tier 2 instruction in the general education classroom—perhaps in a quiet corner of the classroom. In other schools, other staff members, such as a reading specialist or librarian, provide Tier 2 instruction within the classroom or in another room in the school—maybe in the school library or in an available office. During small group instruction each child has more opportunities to respond and the teacher has more opportunities to give immediate and appropriate feedback to that child.

*For example, if a child reads a difficult word correctly, the teacher responds “Good. That’s right.” If the child is having trouble, the teacher might say, “You are close; try that again and be sure to look carefully at the first letter in that word.”*

Think of how many more times this type of exchange can happen with a small group of 3 or 4 students compared to a group of 25 or 26. The teacher is more easily able to guide the child along the right course. An increase in the amount of time a child receives small group instruction also increases the number of opportunities for teacher and student interactions.



Progress is closely monitored and charted for each student in Tier 2. Each child may take a brief test about every other week or daily depending on the plan. Results marked on a chart. After six weeks, the teacher and student can tell if scores are going up (progress is being made), or showing no change or going straight or down (no progress is being made). The goal is for the student’s chart to show that he or she is making progress. Success in Tier 2 may mean that this type of targeted instruction is no longer necessary. The classroom teacher will monitor progress to make sure the success continues. When a student is not successful in Tier 2 instruction, the teacher, parent and the SAT meet to decide what is best for the student. It may be best to try a different intervention or refer the student for a complete multidisciplinary evaluation that requires the parent’s informed written consent.



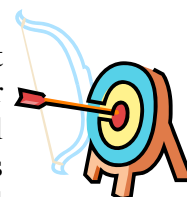
## Tier 2 (General Education)

**Response to Intervention (RTI) Child Study Process (Student Assistance Team) with Targeted Interventions to Address Learning and/or Behavior**

Tier 2 is designed to provide secondary intervention through *early identification* and assistance for a small percentage (5–10%) of students who are performing above or below standards in academics and/or behavior. Interventions for these students either are provided as targeted individual interventions in one or more areas through a SAT Intervention Plan designed by the Student Assistance Team (SAT) or through a specialized school program that includes small group instruction. Tier 2 interventions are provided *in addition* to the quality instruction and universal strategies provided in Tier 1. The interventions are designed to prevent or alleviate challenges a student may be facing and may be short-term or continue for an entire school year.

The ultimate goal is to assist the student in succeeding within the regular education setting with the standard curriculum. In order to select Tier 2 interventions, the SAT may decide that additional assessments are needed and must get parental consent for any test that is not a part of general screening. If a child's behaviors interfere with learning, the SAT will request parental consent to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) so that it can develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).. Targeted group or classroom interventions would: teach the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors; rearrange environments to prevent problems and encourage desirable behaviors; and include a process to monitor and evaluate progress over time.

Secondary Prevention addresses the needs of students who require more support than is available for all students in Tier 1 and less support than is available for individual students in Tier 3. Strategies are more intensive and may involve small groups of students or simple individualized intervention to improve the student's quality of life (learning outcomes, participation in integrated activities, social relationships, independence and self-sufficiency).



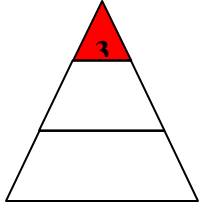
A few students may not demonstrate a significant and positive response to intervention and require a multidisciplinary evaluation and the intensive individual interventions, services and support offered in Tier 3.

*Is there a time when it is appropriate to skip RTI practices and the three-tiered model?*

**Yes.** When a student has an obvious disability, a referral should be made immediately to start the referral for an evaluation for Special Education. Having used the RTI process as part of the evaluation process should provide valuable information to the educational diagnostician

*Can families request to have their child evaluated for special education regardless of the three-tiered model?*

**Yes.** Families may request a referral to the Special Education evaluation process regardless of the three-tiered model thereby starting the 60-day evaluation timeline if the school agrees to evaluate your child. (Your request for Special Education evaluation should be made in writing.) The RTI process should continue and will provide helpful information to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) as it considers whether or not the student is eligible for special education. *For more information on the evaluation process contact Parents Reaching Out.*

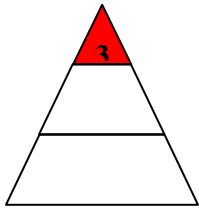


## Tier 3 (Special Education)

**Response to Instruction (RTI)** *Multidisciplinary evaluation with intensive, assessment-based individual interventions developed through the IEP process*

The increased intensity in Tier 3 provides an even larger number of teacher-student interactions, and because the teacher is working with one student or a small group of students with a similar need, all interactions can be tailored specifically to the needs of the individual student(s). If a student's greatest need is developing an understanding of vowel sounds, that will be the focus for planning and instruction for that student or students.

Progress is monitored and charted more frequently in Tier 3 (perhaps twice each week or daily) to make sure the student is doing well and to help the teacher remain aware of needed changes in instruction. Just as in Tier 2, school staff, the parents and the student benefit from having a chart of progress up to date and close at hand. When the student is successful in Tier 3, school staff and the parents decide how to maintain success—to discontinue the intense instruction entirely or to have the child receive Tier 2 instruction.



## Tier 3 (Special Education)

**Response to Intervention (RTI)** *Tier 3 interventions should include: a multidisciplinary evaluation with intensive, assessment-based individual interventions developed through the IEP process*

Students referred to Tier 3 require a multidisciplinary evaluation to determine their need for services at this level. This tier serves a very small percentage of students (1–5 %) who demonstrate a need for an individualized program to meet their learning or behavioral needs. Special education teachers, related service providers, and regular education teachers provide interventions that consist of specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services.

Tier 3 interventions are provided to a student through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An individualized Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) based on the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) will be developed by the IEP team for students identified with high-risk behavior problems. The goal of Tier 3 is for the student to be successfully involved in and progress in the general education curriculum, and achieve the goals in his or her IEP.





## ***Appropriate, Research-Based Instruction***

Schools that use RTI practices make sure that the instruction they use is appropriate and is research-based. This means that the materials and methods that the teachers are using are known to work well and matched to the students grade level and needs.



Think about following directions for baking a cake or changing a tire. You want to feel sure that the methods have been used before and that they worked! In the same way, teachers want to use teaching methods and materials that have been successful. The term *intervention* is used to mean a specific type of instruction that is used to help with a specific type of problem. There are many high quality, appropriate interventions; an important part of RTI is choosing the right ones for students who need extra help.

### **What to find out about *appropriate instruction***

- What reading instruction is used in general education?
- How does the school know the reading instruction is research-based?
- Is my child receiving extra help (over and above time for reading in general education)?
- If so, what interventions is my child receiving? Why?

## ***Collaboration among School Staff Members***

Many school staff members from many schools are very pleased with the way RTI works. The positive results of RTI practices is that school staff are excited about the increased collaboration, or working together, among school staff members. They have a shared responsibility for helping each child succeed.

### **What to find out about collaboration among school staff members**

- How often do staff members have opportunities to learn and plan together to meet the needs of students in our school?
- Other than the general education teacher, who might be helping my child?

## ***Fidelity of Implementation***

Fidelity of implementation means providing instruction in the way it is supposed to be delivered. Educators design instructional methods and materials and then test them long enough to be sure they work well. When teachers use these materials and methods, it is important that they use them the right way.



Example: Left-handed scissors are designed for left-handed children and they work well—for a child who is left-handed. What would happen if a teacher gave a pair of these scissors to a right-handed child? Would using these scissors be the easiest way for a right-handed child to learn to cut? No. Materials and methods used in the classroom work best if used in just the way they were designed to be used make a good “fit” or match with the learning style of the child.

### **What to find out about fidelity of implementation**

- What process does the school have in place to ensure that instructional materials and methods are used as they are supposed to be used in each of the three tiers of instruction?
- What process and guidelines are used to select curriculum and materials?

## How Can Families Be Involved In RTI?

**Tier 1?** Remember that Tier 1 takes place in the general education setting with researched-based instruction and qualified staff. *You can be involved in the following ways:*

- Communicate frequently with your child’s teacher.
- Ask your child about their school day.
- Monitor and assist with homework assignments.
- Support and reinforce the classroom teacher.
- Meet with the teacher if your child starts to experience difficulties.
- Praise your child for good work and discuss issues that are problems.
- Attend school functions, such as back to school night and parent-teacher conferences.



**Tier 2?** If your child is struggling academically or behaviorally, it might be necessary for the school to implement targeted academic and/or behavioral interventions *in the regular classroom* to get your child “back on track.” Your involvement could include the following:

- It is important that you implement and reinforce strategies at home that support school programs, whenever possible.
- Make a referral for your child to the Student Assistance Team. Ask your child’s teacher about the referral process.
- Ask the school to notify you of team meetings and progress on the intervention.
- Attend team meetings as needed. Suggest interventions or strategies that work at home.
- Reinforce your child as he or she improves. *We all need positive signals to let us know that we are on the right track!*
- Find out how long the intervention will be implemented before the teacher and team will know if the intervention is working. Find out how progress will be monitored. Find out what success will look like.

**Tier 3?** If interventions are unsuccessful in Tiers 1 or 2, it may be necessary to make a referral for a complete multidisciplinary evaluation. This evaluation will determine if your child has a disability and needs special education—specially-designed instruction for an eligible student. This is a very formal process and parent involvement is well defined by IDEA 2004. Parent involvement includes, but is not limited to, these activities:

- Your consent is required for the school to evaluate or implement special services.
- When the evaluation is complete, an eligibility determination meeting will occur.
- The school must notify you if they propose to change or not change your child’s eligibility, services, or placement.
- Actively participate in all Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.
- The special education Parent Rights brochure will explain your involvement and rights in special education. (The **Parent Handbook** developed by Parents Reaching Out and our *Advocacy and the IEP Process* workshops will help you make informed decisions.)

## **The Right Question is a Powerful Tool for Families**

*Families can make a difference in the outcomes for their child by asking questions to get the information they need to make informed decisions about their child's education.. Here are a few questions that may help you learn more about RTI.*

### **What to find out about tiered interventions and Tier 1 instruction**

1. How does the school implement the three-tiered model or RTI model?
2. For how many minutes each day is Tier 1 reading instruction?
3. Is my child receiving extra help in reading?
4. If so, what interventions is my child receiving? Why? Who is the instructor?

### **What to find out about Tier 2 instruction**

1. What determines that a student might benefit from Tier 2 instruction?
2. Who is involved in that decision? (Question #1)
3. What interventions are being used for my child?
4. How many students are in my child's group?
5. For how many days per week is Tier 2 instruction and for how many minutes each day?
6. What is used for progress monitoring?
7. How frequently is progress monitored?
8. At what point do teachers consider a different intervention within?
9. Who is involved in that decision? (Question #8)

*If your child is referred for a multi-disciplinary evaluation to determine if he or she is eligible for Special Education or if your child already receives Special Education services, the questions below are important as you work with the team to develop your child's Individualized Educational Program (IEP).*

### **What to find out about Tier 3 instruction (Special Education)**

1. How was it determined that my child might benefit from Special Education?
2. What interventions and services will be used for my child?
3. In what environment will my child receive instruction?
4. How many days per week and for how many minutes each day will my child receive Special Education instruction?
5. What will be used for progress monitoring of my child?
6. How frequently will my child's progress be monitored and reported to us?
7. At what point does the IEP team consider different interventions?
8. What procedural safeguards or rights apply to my family?

## *In Summary*

### **RTI = Common Sense**

Schools are a business—BIG Business! The work of schools affects the lives of thousands of children and young people every day who will be the leaders of tomorrow. Federal and state taxpayer dollars flow to school each year in efforts to improve the academic achievement and social competency of our children so that they can become contributing members of society. We need to use every dollar wisely. Rob Horner and George Sugai suggest: “Schools Need to Work Smarter—Not Harder!” This means we need to look at the big picture and plan for success!

In today’s age there is simply no reason not to work smarter. With a few clicks of a mouse we have literally thousands of *scientific, research-based resources* at our finger tips. Research shows that student success is linked to the degree to which academic and behavioral systems are in place for all students. A well-planned integrated support system based the logic of the three-tier model applied to both behavioral and academic systems promote academic achievement and social competence in a safe environment for learning and teaching in our schools.

As families, we must learn to understand data, ask questions and make **informed decisions** about every aspect of education that affects our children. Making an informed decision means that you understand ALL of the options before you make your final decision and that you understand why that particular option was chosen.

Schools are under many pressures today to improve student achievement reported as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and maintain safe school environments. Families face challenges, too, as we balance the demands of our daily life and take an active role in each phase of our child’s education. In this fast paced world, we must keep our eye on the prize and the big picture for our children. We must all learn to take deep cleansing breaths and think—“How can I help this child?” We must be able to make smart decisions about selecting instructional strategies and interventions so that we can make every learning moment count for our kids.

Using Response to Intervention (RTI) process, when a student struggles with academic tasks or presents challenging or at-risk behaviors, we ask:

*“Is this child getting the instruction that he or she needs to succeed.”*

**We don’t wait for students to fail.**

**We act immediately to get the student the help needed.**

We encourage families to find out about the RTI process in their school. Parents Reaching Out can also help you find the information you need. The Tools section of this book includes resources to help you learn more about RTI and the benefits for your child.

**Remember: “Start Early, End Well”**

# Resources



**Response to Intervention (RTI)** "must be viewed as a schoolwide initiative, with special education as an explicit part of the framework, spanning both general and special education in collaboration with families. The RTI process represents an inclusive partnership between all school personnel and families to identify and address the academic and behavioral needs of learners beginning as early as the preschool years."

Council of Exceptional Children Position on Response to Intervention (RTI) , October 2007

## Acronyms and Definitions

Schools and other systems use letters to describe programs and strategies. These are called acronyms. Sometimes it feels like we're in a bowl of "alphabet soup". Here are just a few acronyms and definitions that will help you be an informed partner in the RTI process and other key parts of the educational system.



**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**—The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that each state measure yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. "Adequate Yearly Progress" is the minimum level improvement that states, school districts and schools must achieve each year. The report is completed and published annually.

**Multidisciplinary Evaluation**—Tests and/or observations by public school staff to determine whether a child has a disability and requires special education and related services. The school district's multidisciplinary team is required to review this evaluation and hold a meeting with the parent to discuss the results. A parent may choose to share any evaluation and assessment information done by the child and family agency or by other qualified persons.

**Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS)**—The NM Public Education Department (NMPED) PED requires every school district to develop a long-range strategic plan to promote student success and continuous school improvement. EPSS is a written guide for the district and schools based on measurable goals and strategies. Resources, community partnerships and staff development activities must be aligned to these goals. All stakeholders, including parents, are involved in the development and implementation of the plan.

**Fidelity**—The unflinching fulfillment of one's duties and obligations and strict adherence to vows or promises. Fidelity means to implement a program as it was intended; to insure that all services are delivered correctly (Ex: that a reading program is implemented correctly).

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**—IDEA 2004 requires that agencies provide special education and related services at no cost to the parent in order that a child with disabilities may benefit from public education. It requires that an Individualized Education Program (IEP) be developed for each child with a disability with measurable goals based on the child's needs and present levels of educational performance.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**—This term means that the placement that is as close as possible to the regular education environment. This is the educational setting that permits a child to receive the most educational benefit while participating in a regular educational environment to the maximum extent appropriate. LRE is a requirement under the IDEA law.

**Response to Intervention (RTI)**—The RTI process is a multi-step approach to providing services and interventions to students who struggle with learning at increasing levels of intensity. The progress students make at each stage of intervention is closely monitored. Results of this monitoring are used to make decisions about the need for further appropriate instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education or both.

**Screening**—The process of quickly looking at a child’s development to find out if there are any areas of concern. It is used to recommend children for more in-depth evaluation.

**Special Education (SPED)**—Specially-designed instruction that is tailored to fit the unique learning strengths and needs of the individual student with disabilities, from age three through high school (to age 22). A major goal of special education is to teach the skills and knowledge the child needs to be as independent as possible. Programs focus on academics and/or social competence and include therapy or other related services to help the child overcome difficulties in all areas of development. These services are required by IDEA to be delivered in the least restrictive environment.

**State Performance Plan (SPP)**—The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 requires States to develop a six-year performance plan. This plan (SPP) evaluates the efforts to implement IDEA and describes measurable plans for continuous improvement. OSEP has identified indicators to be included in the SPP and requires States to report progress on targets set by Federal and State law to determine compliance. Indicators targeted for improvement in New Mexico include:

Graduation rates; drop out rates; participation and performance on assessments; suspension/expulsion rates; Least Restrictive Environments, preschool placements with typically developing peers; early childhood outcomes; parent involvement; disproportionality (Race/Ethnicity/Disability); evaluation timelines; preschool transition; high school transition and post high school outcomes.

**Student Assistance Team (SAT)**—A school-based group of people whose purpose is to provide additional Tier 2 (classroom level) support to students who are experiencing difficulties that are preventing them from benefiting from general education, because they are either performing below or above expectations.

**Supplemental Educational Services (SES)**—One of the provisions of No Child Left Behind is called Supplemental Educational Services. This is extra, outside help for students who attend Title I schools. Supplemental educational services must be offered to parents at the district's expense in the second year after a school has been determined to be “in need of improvement”. All eligible families are offered these services. Priority for this additional help is given to low-income parents. The district provides money for parents to choose the provider of these extra services from a list approved by the NM Public Education Department. SES provides extra help in reading, language arts or math and must not take place during school hours. Services may include tutoring, extra classes, or special programs offered by providers in the community.

These are only a few acronyms. Please contact Parents Reaching Out (1-800-524-5176) and ask for a copy of our **Book of Acronyms**. This book explains terms you may find as you navigate the systems that affect you and your family. This booklet and many other publications may also be downloaded from our web site: [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

## Questions Parent Can Ask About Reading Improvement

Adapted from materials developed by Parent Partners a project of the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center in Davidson North Carolina. [www.ecac-parentcenter.org](http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org)

At the heart of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is a promise to raise standards for all children and to help all children meet those standards. Reading is a critical part of both laws because when children learn to read, they have the key that opens the door to education. Without this key, many children are left behind. When speaking with your child's teacher(s) or education specialist, use the following questions to help you gather the information you need. Remember if you do not understand something, ask to have it explained thoroughly.

### **If you have questions about your child's *overall reading progress*, ask...**

1. What is my child's grade level in reading? What does that mean she can do?

2. Where does she need to improve?

3. Is there a difference between how well my child reads individual words and how well she understands what she reads? If so, what can we do to improve the weaker areas?

4. Are you using a specific program to teach my child? If so, what skills does this program teach?

5. If you are not using a specific program, what strategies are you using to teach my child to identify words, read smoothly and understand what he reads?

6. What kinds of things are you doing to help my child succeed in reading? (such as provide support by a reading specialist, provide different materials)



7. What can I do at home to help my son/daughter read well? (For example: Can you suggest workshops, reading lists, parent/child materials that I may borrow, or website supports that would be useful?)

8. How will I be notified about my child's reading gains? Can you update me every 2-3 weeks? (You might suggest that updates could be through e-mail, phone call, etc.)

**If you have questions about *Word Recognition, sounds and Fluency in Reading*, ask...**

1. Has my child ever been tested for language and sound awareness? If so, how recently and what did the testing show?

2. What is being done in the classroom to help my child avoid pausing unnecessarily at certain words?

3. What strategies are being taught to help my child work through difficult sounds or words when reading?

4. What are some books, poems, nursery rhymes, word games, books, videos, audio materials, etc. that I can use at home to help my child with word recognition, sounds and/or reading aloud?

5. For practicing reading at home, would you help me select material(s) that my child can read comfortably (i.e., where 90% of the words are ones my child knows)?

**If you have questions about *Reading Comprehension*, ask...**

1. When my child is having trouble understanding what she reads, what do you do to help her understand the material?

2. Would you show me what you are doing?

3. Can you tell me about some other activities that I can do at home to help her understand what she reads?

4. What resources can you give me to use at home to help my child?

5. What kinds of activities can we do before and after my child has read to help her understand the information?

**If you have questions about *Testing*, ask...**

1. Will my child be able to pass the NM Standards-Based Assessments (NMSBA) and/or Short-Cycle Assessments in the area of reading?

2. What are you doing to prepare my child for these tests?

3. If your child is not working on the same reading level as his or her peers, ask: Can you tell me how you are measuring progress in reading so that my child continues to progress and does not fall further behind?

## Teacher Tips and Topics for Communicating with Families about RTI

1. Explain how RTI is being implemented to ALL parents at the beginning of the year.
2. Remember that you are explaining a regular education initiative that is responsive to instruction.
3. Tell parents about any new instructional practices that will be used in the classroom and how the students' progress will be monitored.
4. Make sure families know how the school will communicate with them and how they can request information or talk to the teacher.
5. Let ALL parents know what they can do at home to reinforce what is happening at school. Communicating with families on a regular basis builds partnerships.
6. Always make sure that families clearly understand why a child is getting additional instruction/interventions (Tier 2), what academic areas are being included, what the parents can do at home, and how progress or problems will be communicated.
7. Consider family diversity (including culture, education, language, and poverty) when designing your school and family methods of communication.
8. Explain the data, communicate, and celebrate progress!
9. Always listen to a family's concerns about their child having a disability and quickly respond to questions and requests for evaluation. DO NOT try to limit these discussions to students receiving Tier 2 interventions.
10. Remember that both school personnel and parents need to understand that special education is only one of the options for Tier 2 interventions.
11. If the child has been referred for an evaluation to determine special education eligibility, educate and support the family to understand the special education progress and their child's current level of performance.
12. DO NOT underestimate the importance of including families to successfully implement RTI and evidence-based instruction.
13. Remember that successful activities to improve schools and classrooms are like a three-legged stool. The three legs are educators, students, and families; the stool cannot stand successfully if any one of the legs is shorter or smaller than the others.



## Relevant Statutes and Regulations

### At the State Level

The New Mexico Public School Code requires that "...students who do not meet or exceed expectations will be given individual attention and assistance through extended learning programs and individualized tutoring...[and that] public schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward educational excellence." (Subsections D (1) and (3) of 22-1-1.2 NMSA 1978)

#### **The Three-Tier Model and Intervention Progress Monitoring**

The mandate for the SAT as a general education process and responsibility is found in state special education rules and it applies to general education as well. This rule provides that if, through universal screening (Tier I), parent referral, or teacher referral, a student is suspected of having a disability or need for educational support, then the SAT conducts further study in order to address possible causes for the educational difficulty. Prior to referral for special education evaluation, SAT prescribed interventions are to be considered, implemented, and documented. If standards-based progress monitoring of Tier II interventions demonstrate that after no more than 18 weeks, the student's response to intervention has not been positive and significant, then the SAT may refer the child for a full special education evaluation. On the other hand, the SAT may continue to require the implementation of those Tier II interventions until the student no longer requires the interventions, or it may resume the child study process to implement additional interventions. Tier II interventions are to be provided through a properly-constituted SAT, or similar process, and the SAT must include the student's parents, and as appropriate, the student. Subsections B–C of 6.31.2.10 NMAC [7/1/2007]

### At the Federal Level

IDEA 2004 requires careful attention to how special education evaluations are conducted. The statute places emphasis on linking student assessment to student instruction through the use of Response to Intervention (RTI) in the regular classroom. General evaluation requirements found in the IDEA are briefly summarized below:

*A "full and individual initial evaluation" shall be conducted. . . "to determine whether the child is a child with a disability . . . and to determine the educational needs of the child (20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(A) and (C) (i) (I) and (II).)* These requirements and those discussed below obligate teams to consider all aspects of a child's functioning.

An initial evaluation must be conducted *"within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation."* (20 U.S.C. 1414 (a)(1)(C)) *"The agency proposing to conduct an initial evaluation.. . shall obtain informed consent from the parent of such child before conducting the evaluation."*

(20 U.S.C. 1414 (a)(1)(D). These requirements mean that the process for RTI must be carefully tracked. It must be clear to teams that there is a specific point at which the response to intervention process becomes a part of a special education evaluation. Parental consent must be obtained at that point, and the parent must understand that the procedure being implemented will contribute to a decision about whether the student has a learning disability and is eligible for special education services.

## RTI Resources

*ABCs of RTI, December 2007*, by Daryl F. Mellard, Melinda A McKnight and Donald Deshler National Research Center on Learning Disabilities. [www.NRCLD.org](http://www.NRCLD.org) (Available online.)

*Parent Involvement in Early Intervening and Responsiveness to Intervention – a Primer for Parents*, March 2006. Developed by John Copenhaver, Director, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center. (Available online.)

*Response to Intervention (RTI): A Primer for Parents*, 2006. Written by Mary Beth Klotz and Andrea Canter, National Association of School Psychologists. (Available online.)

*A Parent's Guide to Response-to-Intervention*, Parent Advocacy Brief, National Center for Learning Disabilities. Written by Candace Cortiella, Director of the Advocacy Institute. (Available online.)

*Responsiveness to Intervention: Questions PARENTS Must Ask*, Learning Disabilities Association of America, 2006. (Available online.)

*Parent Pages, The Learning Disabilities Resource Kit: Specific Learning Disabilities Determination Procedures and Responsiveness to Intervention*, NRCLD (National Research Center on Learning Disabilities).

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

OSEP Center for Positive Behavior Supports [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

*Response to Intervention: A Systematic Process to Increase Learning Outcomes for All Students Guidance Document for New Mexico Schools* <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/seo/>

*Student Assistance Teams: A Guidance Document for New Mexico Schools* <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/seo/>

Parents Reaching Out offers family-friendly books and fact sheets designed to give you tools to make informed decisions for your child and family. Publications are available in English and Spanish. Here are just a few of our free materials:

- **The Book of Ideas** (designing instruction to meet the needs of students)
- **Practical Inclusive Education in New Mexico** (great tips for inclusive practices)
- **Book of Acronyms** (definitions of commonly used acronyms & abbreviations)
- **Family Involvement** (partnership guide for families, schools and communities)
- **The Handbook** of Parents Rights and Special Education Procedures (step by step guide to the IEP process, communication, Parent Reports, letter writing and more)
- **Did You Know Fact Sheets** (Topics include No Child Left Behind, Adequate Yearly Progress, Quality Reading Instruction, Tutoring, Homework and more)

If you would like any of these publications or a PRO CD of all publications, please call 1-800-524-5176 or 505-247-0192 or visit our website: [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

**The RTI Path to Improving Outcomes for All Students**

RTI is about looking at learning rate and level of performance in academics, behavior, and functional living skills. It is about monitoring student progress in response to high quality research based instruction. The student’s progress and decisions about the need for more intense instruction or programs (including referral to or eligibility for special education) is based on:

- the gap between the student and benchmark/peers
- the student response to intervention within a reasonable period of time
- how “much” the student improves, and
- how “fast” the student improves

**Notes**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Parents Reaching Out

*Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family*

As a statewide non-profit organization, we connect with parents, caregivers, educators and other professionals to promote healthy, positive and caring experiences for New Mexico families and children. We have served New Mexico families for over twenty five years. Our staff and Family Leadership Action Network volunteers reflect the unique diversity of the communities throughout our state.

Children do not come with instructions on how to deal with the difficult circumstances that many families experience. Parents Reaching Out believes that families' needs go beyond the bounds of formal services. *What we can offer to each other is uniquely ours. We have all been there.*

## Our Mission

The mission of Parents Reaching Out is to enhance positive outcomes for families and children in New Mexico through informed decision making, advocacy, education, and resources. Parents Reaching Out provides the networking opportunities for families to connect with and support each other. This mission supports *all families* including those who have children with disabilities, and others who are disenfranchised. Parents Reaching Out achieves this by:

- Developing family leadership
- Connecting families to each other
- Building collaborative partnerships
- Providing families knowledge and tools to enhance their power

## Our Beliefs

- Families need support where ever they are in their journey.
- All families care deeply about their children.
- Families may need tools and support to accomplish their dreams.
- All families are capable of making informed decisions that are right for their family.
- Families in the state benefit from our organization having the staff and materials that meet their diversity.
- Systems that listen carefully to the family perspective improve outcomes for our children.

We invite all families and those serving families and children in New Mexico to make *Parents Reaching Out your one stop resource for a stronger family.* Our publications, workshops, and Resource Center offer tools for informed decision-making and building partnerships in communities. Our trained staff and network of volunteers are here to serve you.

*Parents Reaching Out is the home of:*

NM Parent Information and Resource Center (NMPIRC)

NM Parent Training and Information Center (NMPTIC)

NM Family to Family Health Information Center (NMF2FHIC)

## Parents Reaching Out

1920 B Columbia Drive, SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
1-505-247-0192 ♦ 1-800-524-5176  
[www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

From I-25—take the Gibson Blvd Exit 222 and go East on Gibson. Turn left at the third stop light (Girard). Turn left on Vail. Go one block to Columbia. Turn left on Columbia. Parents Reaching Out is on the east side of the street. Welcome!

