

NORTH CAROLINA

Working Together for Children:

A Problem-Solving Model Guide for Parents and Teachers

Welcome to the problem-solving process. This document has been created to help explain the process, provide some definitions, and tell you where you can find more information. It is important that you understand problem-solving since your involvement in the process is critical to your child's success.

What is RtI?

Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) is the practice of providing high quality instruction that is matched to the needs of each student. Student progress is checked often and the information gathered is used to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals. Schools often use a problem-solving model to answer these four questions:

- **What is the problem and why is it happening?**
- **What are we going to do about the problem?**
- **Are we implementing our plan as intended?**
- **Did our plan work as we had expected?**

What should I expect in the problem-solving process?

The level of difficulty a student is experiencing and the necessary resources to address the student's difficulties will often be referred to as "*tiers*" within the problem-solving model. There are four different tiers:

- **Tier I** The student's needs are addressed through informal parent and teacher conferences.
- **Tier II** There are times when help from additional school staff is needed to address the student's needs. At this level, other educators are asked to provide additional support, services, and/or recommendations for the instructional plan.
- **Tier III** If the student is not making adequate progress and additional information is needed, a "*Problem-Solving Team*" can be consulted. The planning, documentation, and data collection are very specific at this level.
- **Tier IV** Based on information that has been collected it may become clear that additional resources and services are necessary to address the student's needs. In this case, referral for special education services can be considered. Parents may be asked to sign a consent form giving permission to evaluate their child to determine need and eligibility for special education services.

The purpose of the tiers is to provide the level of support that is needed. It is not necessary that all student needs be addressed by going through each tier of the problem-solving process. Instead, school staff and parents will look at the individual issues of each child to determine the supports needed to resolve the problem.

What is my role in the process?

Your role in the process is as a partner. You will be asked to help provide information about your child's strengths and challenges. When you attend meetings to participate in the problem-solving process, you will assist in designing an instructional plan for your child. With your involvement and ongoing support, the plan is more likely to be successful. In the problem-solving process, the team will work to have open communication about the difficulties that your child is having and what is working to help your child make progress. The goal is that this process will end with discussions about your child's successes.

How will we know if we are meeting my child's needs?

In order for the team to know if the plan is working, information is collected about the effect of the instruction that your child is receiving. This information is important for decision making and is often called ongoing *progress monitoring*. If the data collected shows your child is making progress, the intervention can be scaled back. If this is not the case, the team will decide what to do next. As a parent, you will be involved in each tier of this process.

Where can I get more information?

You may get more information from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction- Responsiveness to Instruction website:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/responsiveness/>

You may also get more information on RTI by contacting your child's school.