



# Student Services Newsletter

## RTI: Resources, Tips, & Information:

### Forms, Forms, & More Forms

Does it seem to you like every year the Response to Intervention (RTI) forms and/or process changes? And leaves you scratching your head, wondering just what exactly you are supposed to do—this form or that one? This timeline or that one? This process or that one? Well, if it is any comfort, you're not alone—just about everyone else feels the same way! Just the basics: No minimum timeline for Tier 1, Minimum timeline for Tier 2 = 4 weeks **IF** you progress monitor weekly and get 4 data, Minimum timeline for Tier 3 = 8 weeks **IF** you progress monitor weekly and get 8 data points from PM, Maximum timeline for Tier 2 and/or 3 = **NONE**. If the student is being successful, leave him/her on the tier he/ she is on.

Any form you need—absolutely must have, are required to complete—is available (See your Tier2 or Tier3 school representative for these forms). Additionally, a number of other forms are available that you might find useful in implementing RTI.

I encourage you to complete your form electronically for several reasons: (1) they are easier to import into SEMStracker if a student is referred for a comprehensive evaluation; (2) it is much simpler to complete future forms by just cutting and pasting; (3) the forms can easily be emailed to anyone who needs access, and (4) cutting down on paper usage. You are of course free to use print the forms if you prefer, but try electronically—you might decide you like it!

## GIFTED: What is Giftedness?

The quick response is that there is, as yet, no universally agreed upon answer to this question. Giftedness, intelligence, & talent are fluid concepts & may look different in different contexts and cultures. Even within schools you will find a range of personal beliefs about the word "gifted," which has become a term with multiple meanings & much nuance. According to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports).

## ESOL: Introduction

The ESOL Program has transitioned from a discrete skills curriculum to a standards-based curriculum emphasizing social and academic language proficiency. The program's overarching standard is that students will use English to communicate and demonstrate academic, social, and cultural understanding. To reach this standard, it is critical that instructional approaches, both in ESOL and general education classes, accommodate the needs of Georgia's linguistically and culturally diverse student and parent populations. To the extent practicable, it is appropriate to use the home language as a means of facilitating instruction for English language learners and communication with their parents.

<http://www.wida.us/>

## Psychological Services: The school psychologist's role in school safety

**School psychologists.** Have a minimum of a specialist-level degree (60 graduate semester hour minimum) in school psychology, which combines the disciplines of psychology and education. They typically have extensive knowledge of learning, motivation, behavior, childhood disabilities, assessment, evaluation, and school law. School psychologists specialize in analyzing complex student and school problems and selecting and implementing appropriate evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes at home and school. School psychologists consult with teachers and parents to provide coordinated services and supports for students struggling with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral problems, and those experiencing anxiety, depression, emotional trauma, grief, and loss. They are regular members of school crisis teams and collaborate with school administrators and other educators to prevent and respond to crises. They have specialized training in conducting risk and threat assessments designed to identify students at-risk for harming themselves or others. School psychologists' training in evaluation, data collection, and interpretation can help ensure that decisions made about students, the school system, and related programs and learning supports are based on appropriate evidence.

### Section 504: The Basics

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Disability means:

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Physical Impairment means:

Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems: neurological; musculo-skeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary; hemic & lymphatic; skin; & endocrine.

Mental Impairment means:

Any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, & specific learning disabilities.

### Upcoming Events:

**\*C. Holley Meets with TGE RTI representatives to discuss process and procedures**

Tuesday, September 24, 3:10 P.M. in Ms. Judy's office

**\*C. Holley Meets with MCMS RTI representatives to discuss process and procedures**

Wednesday, September 25, 3:10 P.M. in the Conference Room

\* Please email me or call me with ANY questions, concerns, suggestions, or ideas you may have.

Thank you for all that you do for our students in McIntosh County.

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