Pyramid of Interventions

Parent Guide

Written by parents, for parents.
Dear Parent:

Cincinnati Public Schools is pleased to provide you with the Parent Guide to the Pyramid of Interventions. This guide was developed as part of Superintendent Rosa Blackwell’s bold new strategic plan to improve student achievement by focusing on both the academic and behavioral needs of all students.

At Cincinnati Public Schools, we know that every student can succeed. But students are not all the same. Some need more intensive support, while others achieve with minimal intervention. That’s why our schools are using the Pyramid of Interventions — a step-by-step process that uses both prevention and intervention techniques to help students achieve to the best of their ability. The process is used in every schoolhouse and benefits all students, from the most gifted to those who need the most help. The Pyramid of Interventions helps create and maintain ideal learning environments where all students can thrive both academically and behaviorally.

This booklet will help you understand the Pyramid of Interventions and how it can help your child. It was written by parents for parents. Use this guide to partner with your child’s school to ensure success.

Markay L. Winston, Ph.D.
Director of Student Services
What is the Pyramid of Interventions?

The Pyramid of Interventions is a step-by-step process that uses both prevention and intervention techniques to raise the academic achievement of all students in Cincinnati Public Schools. It is the district’s way of ensuring a positive learning environment for all students … every day.

The Pyramid of Interventions helps reduce referrals to the Alternative to Suspension and Alternative to Expulsion programs. In addition, it eliminates the need for remedial programs that separate students from their classmates. The Pyramid of Interventions uses a series of strategies and techniques to help all students stay on the right track both academically and behaviorally. Each school develops a customized set of support services to meet its students’ unique needs.

The Pyramid of Interventions helps parents and teachers learn the following:

• What is the problem facing a student or a group of students?
• Why is the problem happening?
• What is the solution?
• What is the plan to reach the solution?
• How will we know when the solution has been reached?
Levels of Intervention

The Pyramid of Interventions supports all students in every schoolhouse. It also provides additional help for students who need more support. There are three levels of intervention, as shown in the chart below:

Tier 1 – Supports all students in a school
Tier 2 – Provides additional support for smaller groups of students who need more targeted help
Tier 3 – Provides intensive support for individual students not successful with Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions

In the illustration on the opposite page, the Pyramid of Interventions is wider on the bottom, because most students fit there. It grows narrower as it reaches the top because not as many students need the more intensive support.

What are the benefits of the Pyramid of Interventions?

• Learning and behavioral difficulties are prevented.
• Schools report an overall increase in student achievement.
• Support is available for all students, from the most gifted to those with significant academic or behavioral challenges.
• Fewer students are referred to Alternative to Suspension and Alternative to Expulsion programs.
• Schools report reductions in the achievement gap.
The Pyramid of Interventions

**Academic Systems**

**Tier III: Intensive, Individual Interventions (1%-5%)**
- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- High intensity

**Tier II: Targeted Group Interventions (5%-10%)**
- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

**Tier I: Schoolwide Interventions (80%-90%)**
- Core instruction
- All students
- Preventative, proactive

**Behavioral Systems**

**Tier III: Intensive, Individual Interventions (1%-5%)**
- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- Intense, durable procedures

**Tier II: Targeted Group Interventions (5%-10%)**
- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

**Tier I: Schoolwide Interventions (80%-90%)**
- Core instruction
- All students
- Preventative, proactive
What kinds of solutions can the Pyramid of Interventions provide?

Tier 1 – For all students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child:</td>
<td>get bad grades on assignments.</td>
<td>My child:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>doesn’t finish work in class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complains that homework is too hard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>does not turn in homework assignments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>says schoolwork is too easy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is it just my child, or do other children have the same problem?

Possible Solutions

| | Parents and teachers work out ways to share information about the student’s work. | Parents and teachers work out ways to share information about the student’s behavior. |
| | Teachers re-teach skills that some students missed. | Teachers teach behavior expectations. |
| | Support materials are added to the classroom curriculum. | Teachers and parents reward positive behavior. |
| | Students get more time in class to practice skills. | Students are screened for gifted ability. |
| | Students are screened for gifted ability. | |
## Tier 2 – For targeted groups of students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child:</td>
<td>• is behind in class work and cannot keep up.</td>
<td>My child:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• takes too long to do homework and needs a lot of extra help from me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• gets poor scores on academic achievement tests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• seems to be having more trouble with schoolwork than other students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Possible Solutions | • Students practice grade-level skills in small groups, 30 minutes per day, 2 to 3 times per week. | • Teachers re-teach behavioral expectations and ensure that expectations are written and visible. |
|                    | • Teachers get additional help from other staff to help students learn. | • Counseling sessions are used to help manage behavior. |
|                    | • Teachers give smaller amounts of homework targeting more specific skills. | • Rewards and incentives are provided for good behavior. |
|                    | • After-school programs are used when extra help is needed. | • Home and school disciplinary techniques are coordinated so that students know what to expect. |

### What can parents do to support Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions?

- Talk about your concerns with all of your child’s teachers.
- Set a timeline for things to get better with your child.
- Volunteer to observe in the classroom.
- Learn about the academic standards that are appropriate for your child’s grade level. You can find this information on the Cincinnati Public Schools’ Web site at www.cps-k12.org. Click on the “Academics” tab.
- Talk to the principal if you cannot work things out with your child’s teachers.
- Get to know the parents of your child’s classmates.
- Ask your child’s teachers for a daily homework log or a behavior log.
- Ask about a specialist (academic or behavioral) who may be available to help your child.
- Read all the paperwork your child brings home from school.
- Ask questions.
## Tier 3 – Intensive Support for Individual Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My child:</td>
<td>My child:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• is getting more frustrated with school every day.</td>
<td>• is having behavior problems that seem to be getting worse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• can’t keep up with class work.</td>
<td>• has been sent to the Alternative to Suspension or Alternative to Expulsion programs multiple times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• doesn’t seem to understand what the teacher expects.</td>
<td>• refuses to go to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• is only being noticed for weaknesses rather than strengths.</td>
<td>• requires me to miss time from work because of parent conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Solutions</td>
<td>• Get parental permission to engage in more intensive supports.</td>
<td>• Get parental permission to engage in more intensive supports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An Intervention Assistance Team meets to appropriately address needs.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students engage in daily practice of academic skills.</td>
<td>• Develop an individualized behavior support plan that includes alternative behaviors to replace disruptive behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor progress daily to determine if interventions are working.</td>
<td>• Monitor progress daily to determine if interventions are working.</td>
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At this stage, it is time to engage an Intervention Assistance Team to help develop a plan to address your child’s concerns. This team will follow a problem-solving process to better understand your child’s needs and develop appropriate solutions. An Intervention Assistance Team can have many members including but not limited to:

- Parents
- School principal
- Teachers
- Counselor/social worker
- Intervention specialists (special education teachers)
- Instructional assistants
- School psychologists
- Case managers, therapists, juvenile court workers
- Other school staff (bus drivers, cafeteria workers, etc.)
- School nurse
- Speech and language pathologists
- Friends of the family
- Others

Be sure to include all the people you feel can support your child’s success.

**What can parents do to support Tier 3 interventions?**

- Request an Intervention Assistance Team meeting with the school’s principal.
- If you and/or your child are learning to speak English as a second language, request an interpreter.
- Bring along people that you trust to the meetings.
- Attend all team meetings.
- Take good notes and keep all paperwork.
- Stay involved and engaged at all times.
- Ask questions.
- Follow up with any evaluations or appointments that Intervention Assistance Team members ask you to make.
- Continue working with the team until you are satisfied with the plan developed to help your child.
More helpful resources at Cincinnati Public Schools

Cincinnati Parents for Public Schools: Helps parents become more involved in their child’s education at Cincinnati Public Schools and sponsors a Parent Leadership Initiative. For more information, call (513) 751-5437.

Customer Help Center: Provides information about the district’s services and helps with problem solving. For more information, call (513) 363-0123.

Parent Connect: A computer program that lets CPS parents check their child’s assignments, grades, discipline and attendance online. Register at www.cps-k12.org/Parents/Parentconnect or at your child’s school.

Department of Student Services: Works with parents and schools to make sure all students have the services they need to succeed. For more information, call (513) 363-0280.

Office of Second Language Acquisition: Provides support to students who speak English as a second language. For more information, call (513) 363-0211.

CPS Autism Support Team: Gives information to parents and schools and helps identify support systems for children and teens with Autism Spectrum Disorder. For more information, call (513) 363-5078.

Gifted Programming Department: Identifies children for gifted services and resources. For more information, call (513) 363-0196.

Parent Mentor: Gives parents and guardians information and support to help children who have problems at school. For more information, call (513) 363-0178.
Other places to get help

Developmental Disabilities:
• Hamilton County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities: (513) 794-3300 or www.hamiltonmrdd.org
• The Arc Hamilton County: (513) 821-2113 or www.archamilton.org
• Children’s Hospital Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics: (513) 636-4611 or www.cincinnatichildrens.org
• Community Integrated Training and Education (CITE) Services: (513) 619-2936

Autism Spectrum Disorders:
• Kelly O’Leary Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders: (513) 636-5340 or www.cincinnatichildrens.org
• Autism Society of Greater Cincinnati: (513) 561-2300 or www.autismcincy.org

Behavioral and Mental Health (including ADHD):
• Mental Health Access Point: (513) 558-8888
• Ohio Federation for Children’s Mental Health: (513) 948-3077
• Children’s Hospital Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics: (513) 636-4611 or www.cincinnatichildrens.org
• Talbert House Project PASS: (513) 684-7968 or www.talberthouse.org
• Violence and Bullying Prevention Hotline: 1-800-788-7254

Brain Injury:
• Brain Injury Association of Ohio: (513) 542-2704 or www.biaoh.org
• Children’s Hospital Pediatric Rehabilitation: (513) 636-7480 or www.cincinnatichildrens.org

Learning Disabilities:
• Learning Disabilities Online: www.ldonline.org
• Literacy Network of Greater Cincinnati: (513) 621-7323 www.lngc.org
• Children’s Hospital Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics: (513) 636-4611 or www.cincinnatichildrens.org

Advocacy and Information about Your Child’s Rights:
• Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati: (513) 241-9400 or www.lascinti.org
• Memorial, Inc.: (513) 621-3032 or www.memorialinc.org
• Special Education Regional Resource Center (SERRC): (513) 563-0045 or www.swoserrc.org
• Wrightslaw Online Legal Resource: www.wrightslaw.com
Glossary of terms

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):**
Individual plan written to prevent problem behaviors while teaching and supporting positive behavior in school.

**English as a Second Language, (ESL) English Language Learner (ELL):**
Students who speak a language other than English at home.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA):**
Description of a student’s behavior and all the things that might be affecting it. Determines why the student has certain problems at school.

**Individual Education Program (IEP):**
Plan written for a student with an identified educational disability. It describes specifically designed instruction and support systems to help the student learn.

**Intervention Assistance Team (IAT):**
Team of school staff and family that meets to decide how to help a student who is struggling at school with learning or behavior.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP) Plan:**
Education plan of academic and behavioral skills written for an ELL student.

**Multifactored Evaluation (MFE):**
The evaluation process that looks at the whole child to find out if he/she is eligible for special education services.

**Written Education Plan (WEP):**
Education plan for an identified gifted student.
# Key Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Center Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Services Manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor/Social Worker</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Team meeting notes and follow up

Date: __________________________

To Whom Did I Talk? ________________________________________________

When Did I Talk to Him/Her? _________________________________________

What Did I Learn? _________________________________________________

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___________________________________________________________________

What is the Plan? _________________________________________________

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___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

Is the Plan Working? _____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________
Team meeting notes and follow up

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Team meeting notes and follow up

Date: ________________________

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What Did I Learn? ______________________________________

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What is the Plan? ______________________________________

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Is the Plan Working? ______________________________________

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Pyramid vs. cone: Why CPS uses a cone to illustrate its ‘Pyramid of Interventions’

Cincinnati Public Schools’ decision to call its model for instruction and intervention the Pyramid of Interventions and to illustrate it as a cone was deliberate on the part of a districtwide steering committee.

Members of this committee include representatives from diverse stakeholder groups, such as the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT), the Cincinnati Association of Administrators and Supervisors (CAAS), Mayerson Academy, Hamilton County Educational Service Center, the Southwest Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center (SERRC), Superintendent Rosa Blackwell’s office, Central Office administrators, multiple community partners and parents.

Reasons supporting the decision include:

- The cone works best to illustrate CPS’ model, which uses a round pie-piece base made up of six components — standards-based practices; data-based decision making; culturally responsive practices; academic and behavior supports; explicit instruction of academic and social skills; and collaborative strategic planning.
- CPS coined the term, “Pyramid of Interventions” in 2005. The steering committee decided to keep the term for consistency.
- It allows CPS to remain in alignment with the graphic representation that the Ohio Department of Education is using.

Written by a committee of Cincinnati Public Schools’ parents: Anita Braswell, Cassandra Clement, Vicke Coleman, Amy Scroghan, Sandy Tolliver and Lillian Woods, with help from the CPS Parent Mentor, Carol Igoe.

Thank you to the members of the Pyramid of Interventions Outreach Team and the following CPS staff who helped to complete this Parent Guide: Dr. Markay Winston, Director, Department of Student Services; Kathy Bower, Lead School Psychologist; Marie Kobayoshi, Bilingual Psychologist; Public Affairs Department.

For more information about the Pyramid of Interventions, visit www.cps-k12.org. Select “General Information.”
The Cincinnati Public School District provides equal educational, vocational and employment opportunities for all people without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, or affiliation with a union or professional organization. The district is in compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. For additional information, contact the Title IX Coordinator or Section 504 Student Coordinator at 363-0000. TDD#363-0124.

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