

# Pyramid of Interventions



## Parent Guide

Written by parents, for parents.

At Cincinnati Public Schools, we value the involvement of families and communities in student learning and school/district decision making.

## 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.

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## 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

## Behavioral Systems

### Tier III: Intensive, Individual Interventions (1%-5%)

Individual students  
Assessment-based  
High intensity

### 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 II: Targeted Group Interventions (5%-10%)

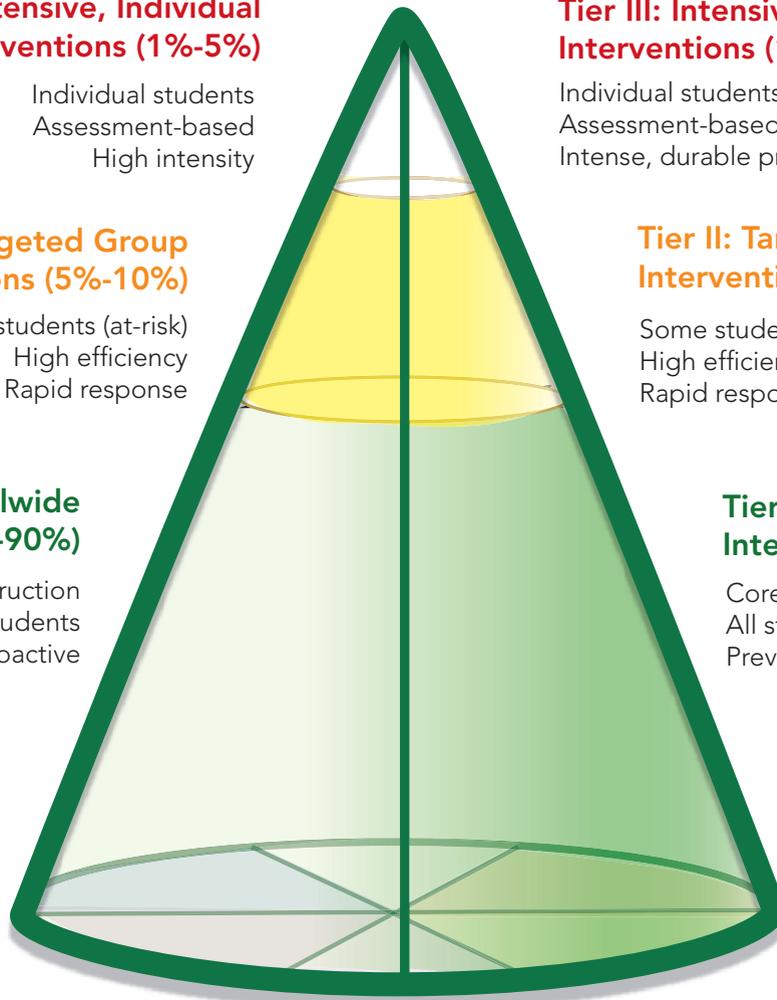
Some students (at-risk)  
High efficiency  
Rapid response

### Tier I: Schoolwide Interventions (80%-90%)

Core instruction  
All students  
Preventative, proactive

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Core instruction  
All students  
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# What kinds of solutions can the Pyramid of Interventions provide?

## Tier 1 – For all students

	Academic	Behavioral
<b>Concerns</b>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gets bad grades on assignments.</li> <li>• doesn't finish work in class.</li> <li>• complains that homework is too hard.</li> <li>• does not turn in homework assignments.</li> <li>• says schoolwork is too easy.</li> </ul>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seems to get into trouble all the time.</li> <li>• complains about being bullied.</li> <li>• is bored and doesn't want to go to school.</li> <li>• gets good grades but is disruptive in class.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Is it just my child, or do other children have the same problem?</i></b>		
<b>Possible Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and teachers work out ways to share information about the student's work.</li> <li>• Teachers re-teach skills that some students missed.</li> <li>• Support materials are added to the classroom curriculum.</li> <li>• Students get more time in class to practice skills.</li> <li>• Students are screened for gifted ability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and teachers work out ways to share information about the student's behavior.</li> <li>• Teachers teach behavior expectations.</li> <li>• Teachers and parents reward positive behavior.</li> <li>• Students are screened for gifted ability.</li> </ul>

## Tier 2 – For targeted groups of students

	Academic	Behavioral
<b>Concerns</b>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is behind in class work and cannot keep up.</li> <li>• takes too long to do homework and needs a lot of extra help from me.</li> <li>• gets poor scores on academic achievement tests.</li> <li>• seems to be having more trouble with schoolwork than other students.</li> </ul>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• was sent out of class at least twice in the past month.</li> <li>• makes excuses to avoid going to school.</li> <li>• seems to have trouble getting along with classmates.</li> <li>• has been sent home early from school.</li> <li>• does not know how to socialize with classmates.</li> </ul>
<b>Possible Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice grade-level skills in small groups, 30 minutes per day, 2 to 3 times per week.</li> <li>• Teachers get additional help from other staff to help students learn.</li> <li>• Teachers give smaller amounts of homework targeting more specific skills.</li> <li>• After-school programs are used when extra help is needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers re-teach behavioral expectations and ensure that expectations are written and visible.</li> <li>• Counseling sessions are used to help manage behavior.</li> <li>• Rewards and incentives are provided for good behavior.</li> <li>• Home and school disciplinary techniques are coordinated so that students know what to expect.</li> <li>• Students are given time daily with a trusted adult.</li> <li>• Reminders are used to keep students focused on their class work.</li> </ul>

### 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](http://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

	Academic	Behavioral
<b>Concerns</b>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is getting more frustrated with school every day.</li> <li>• can't keep up with class work.</li> <li>• doesn't seem to understand what the teacher expects.</li> <li>• is only being noticed for weaknesses rather than strengths.</li> </ul>	<p>My child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is having behavior problems that seem to be getting worse.</li> <li>• has been sent to the Alternative to Suspension or Alternative to Expulsion programs multiple times.</li> <li>• refuses to go to school.</li> <li>• requires me to miss time from work because of parent conferences.</li> </ul>
<b>Possible Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get parental permission to engage in more intensive supports.</li> <li>• An Intervention Assistance Team meets to appropriately address needs.</li> <li>• Students engage in daily practice of academic skills.</li> <li>• Monitor progress daily to determine if interventions are working.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get parental permission to engage in more intensive supports.</li> <li>• An Intervention Assistance Team meets to appropriately address needs.</li> <li>• Develop an individualized behavior support plan that includes alternative behaviors to replace disruptive behaviors.</li> <li>• Monitor progress daily to determine if interventions are working.</li> </ul>

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](http://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](http://www.hamiltonmrdd.org)
- **The Arc Hamilton County:**  
(513) 821-2113 or [www.archamilton.org](http://www.archamilton.org)
- **Children's Hospital Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics:**  
(513) 636-4611 or [www.cincinnatichildrens.org](http://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](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org)
- **Autism Society of Greater Cincinnati:**  
(513) 561-2300 or [www.autismcincy.org](http://www.autismcincy.org)

## Learning Disabilities:

- **Learning Disabilities Online:**  
[www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)
- **Literacy Network of Greater Cincinnati:**  
(513) 621-7323 [www.lngc.org](http://www.lngc.org)
- **Children's Hospital Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics:**  
(513) 636-4611 or [www.cincinnatichildrens.org](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.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](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org)
- **Talbert House Project PASS:**  
(513) 684-7968 or [www.talberthouse.org](http://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](http://www.biaoh.org)
- **Children's Hospital Pediatric Rehabilitation:**  
(513) 636-7480 or [www.cincinnatichildrens.org](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org)

## Advocacy and Information about Your Child's Rights:

- **Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati:**  
(513) 241-9400 or [www.lascinti.org](http://www.lascinti.org)
- **Memorial, Inc.:**  
(513) 621-3032 or [www.memorialinc.org](http://www.memorialinc.org)
- **Special Education Regional Resource Center (SERRC):**  
(513) 563-0045 or [www.swoserrc.org](http://www.swoserrc.org)
- **Wrightslaw Online Legal Resource:**  
[www.wrightslaw.com](http://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.

## **Multifactorial 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

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Center Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School Psychologist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Case Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Services Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor/Social Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# 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? \_\_\_\_\_

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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, Vicky Coleman, Amy Scrogan, Sandy Tolliver and Lillian Woods, with help from the CPS Parent Mentor, Carol Igoo.

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](http://www.cps-k12.org). Select "General Information."**

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