Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

Tier 3 is the most intense level of intervention on the continuum of pyramid options. At Tier 3, the goal is remediation of existing academic, social, or emotional problems and prevention of more severe problems. Chronic non-responders to Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 support are candidates for these Tier 3 intensive interventions.

It is possible that some students may have learning gaps so severe that the problem-solving team will recommend Tier 3 interventions without first trying Tier 2 support. Districts need to independently establish specific criteria for which students will be served at each tier. There is a considerable increase in intensity with Tier 3 interventions, namely:

- Group size is only one to three students.
- Time per week is 150-300 minutes.
- Duration is 9-12 weeks.
- Progress monitoring is conducted up to twice a week.
- Level of intensity generally requires a full period of instruction held outside a general education classroom.
- Educator responsible for intervention sessions requires specialized training (e.g. Title 1 reading teacher, psychologist, counselor, special education teacher, therapist, highly trained aide using a scripted program).

Tier 3 Structure and Criteria

Like Tier 2, daily Tier 3 lessons need to be fast paced with good modeling followed by very focused guided practice. Ongoing positive corrective feedback is needed to keep student interest and involvement high. These lessons are more intense because of the smaller group size and longer sessions. Independent worksheets are minimized because active instruction is what these students need. The class routine needs to be so familiar that students are able to follow the lessons with little time wasted explaining basic directions. Lessons will reinforce old skills while modeling and teaching new ones.

Source: What Every School Leader Needs to Know about RTI
RtI Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

Tier 3 Instruction needs

- Systematic and explicit instruction that includes modeling and direct teaching using multiple examples.
- Specialized programming that focuses on just a few key skills at a time.
- Mirroring of skills being taught in the general education classroom, as well as attention to filling in skill gaps that are causing difficulty in the general education classroom.
- A variety of practice opportunities that coordinate with identified classroom skills but use different approaches.
- Continuous corrective feedback, encouragement, and self-monitoring activities.

At Tier 3, students who are two or more years below grade level need highly individualized instruction and support four or five times per week. These sessions often utilize intensive research-based programs to target the exact weaknesses of particular students.

After 9-12 weeks of intensive Tier 3 intervention, the problem-solving team (which includes the classroom teachers) analyzes the student data and makes a decision to:

- Support the student using only Tier 1 and Tier 2 intervention if the Tier 3 strategies have been successful.
- Recommend continuing Tier 3 instruction using new strategies if the student is showing growth but not closing the academic or behavior gap.
- Recommend formal evaluation procedures for special education while continuing new Tier 3 strategies if Tier 3 intervention is unsuccessful.

Source: What Every School Leader Needs to Know about RTI