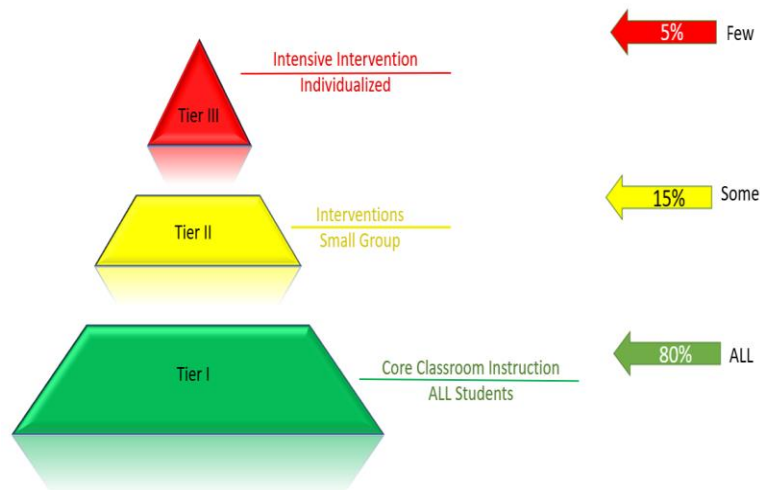




What actions should we consider if 80% of students are not responding to Tier I instruction?

The foundation of an effective multi-tiered system of supports is ensuring that an effective Tier I program is meeting the needs of approximately 80% of its students. When implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) the image of the pyramid comes to mind, which is made up of three tiers. The foundation of this framework is Tier I, where 100% of students in Georgia receive their daily core instruction based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and a valid and reliable curriculum.

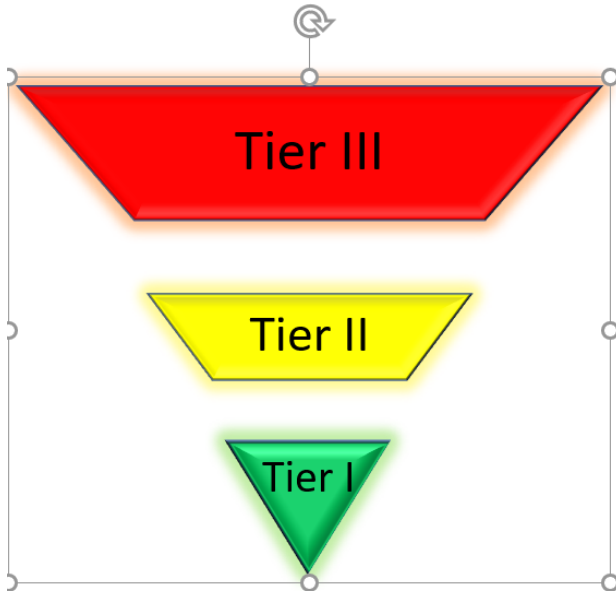


Tier I is considered the most important level of support because it provides the foundation for successful teaching and learning in school. According to Dr. Tessie Rose Bailey, Principal Technical Advisor for the American Institutes for Research, “The greatest threat to MTSS implementation and school success is poor quality Tier I.” Furthermore, she states, “Districts and schools cannot buy or intervene their way out of poor-quality Tier I instruction.” There has to be an intentional focus on providing effective Tier I instruction, since interventions alone are not the solution. It is important that **all** learners, including students with disabilities (SWDs), English Learners (ELs) and gifted students, receive the appropriate supports and/or accommodations in order to meet their diverse needs.

Providing effective Tier I instruction is critical in order to meet the needs of ALL students. It should be designed adequately so all students have the supports needed to access the core curriculum. To ensure that students with disabilities have access to effective Tier I instruction, it is critical that they have access to specially-designed instruction (SDI) that allows them to access the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and ensures their right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). [Free Appropriate Public Education \(FAPE\) \(34 C.F.R. 300.101-300.113; Georgia Rule 160-4-7-.02\) \(gadoe.org\)](https://www.gadoe.org/FAPE). English Learners (ELs) also should be provided with adequate high leverage practices

that allow them to be able to access effective Tier I instruction, [High Leverage Practices for Teaching ELs](#).

When 100% of the students are receiving access to Tier I instruction and at least 80% are not being successful, there are some actions for intensifying instruction at Tier I that should be considered. These actions involve the collective efforts of leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents, [Tips for Intensifying Instruction at Tier 1 \(mtss4success.org\)](#). If your school has an inverted pyramid, the additional questions below should be considered by the leadership team to determine possible root causes for this concern.



1. Does Tier I instruction include a viable curriculum and instructional practices that include differentiation, high leverage practices, and evidence-based practices?
2. Are the numbers of students in need of interventions or intensive interventions greater than 20%?
3. Is any specific subgroup indicating a strong need for interventions? (>20%)
4. Does professional learning support continuous improvement of instructional practice?

Additionally, incorporating differentiation into instruction provides opportunity to meet the diverse needs of all students. Research also indicates evidence-based practices (EBPs) when coupled with high leverage practices (HLPs), [High-Leverage Practices | TeachingWorks](#), provide a continuum of supports which result in a rapid response to academic and/or behavioral needs. All of these practices are applicable to all classrooms to help support implementation of effective Tier I instruction. However, even with quality Tier I instruction, it is recognized that some students will need layered supports that may be provided at Tiers II and III.

For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth, ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.