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# J. Warren Killam School

*A T.R.R.F.C.C. Place to Be!*

## General Education Support at Killam

This past week, you may have received letters from our reading team and interventionist team informing you that your child will be accessing general education tutoring or Title I intervention support. I am writing to clarify some commonly asked questions regarding our general education tutor and interventionist supports.

*Why are there different levels of general education support?* We want our students to have as much time on learning as possible. We also know students learn best through small group opportunities. By nature, small group instruction is more intense as students receive more direct attention. We use many terms in education to discuss how we teach. Currently, we use the terminology *Tier I* for whole class general education teaching and *Tier II* for small group general education re-teaching or instruction. The tutors and interventionists support the Tier II instruction. We have different levels so that we can target what our students need.

*Why do we have two titles for our staff who support general education Tier II teaching?* It is simply a matter of funding source. Our tutors are a part of the Reading Public School staff. Our interventionists are funded through the state Title I grant funding. As part of the Title I grant, we are required to send notification to families about the interventionist groups, including an agreement called a "compact" that states the student, family, and school will work to promote your child's academic success. Although we inform families when students are working with a tutor, we are not required to have the same written agreements as Title I. Oftentimes, when a family receives the "compact," it makes it feel more official or serious. Please note that the teaching your child is receiving is similar regardless of who they work with; it is only the funding source and requirements that are different. Again, Tier II is part of general education.

*How does this all work?* At Killam, we are fortunate to have staff who support all our classrooms, allowing teachers to provide targeted small group instruction for students. As part of "how we do business," our students work with multiple staff throughout their day. Our teachers, tutors, and interventionists work together to determine what our students need and how we can give extra boosts or opportunities for our students to learn a concept. We know practice and repetition makes a huge difference in our students learning. We determine who benefits from working with our tutors and interventionists through the formal and informal assessments we do throughout the year. Our teachers meet as teams every six weeks to review the data and determine new groupings and areas of focus. In some cases, these groupings are across the grade level while in others, students work with students within their own homeroom. The groupings are dependent upon many factors such as concept development, skill sets, or even scheduling.

When our intervention and tutor letters go home, we often get asked, "do I need to be worried?" If your child's teacher has concerns about your child's academic progress, they will have a conversation with you. We are a school who promotes "no surprises," meaning we want a partnership between home and school that discusses the successes and challenges that our children face. Please remember that just because your child is accessing tutor or interventionist support does not necessarily mean we have concerns. Again, these groups are all part of how we teach through general education.

If you continue to have questions about how your child is doing and the supports he or she is receiving, the fall conferences are a great time to discuss this with your child's teacher. We want our students to thrive at Killam. My hope is that this letter better informs you on how we foster an environment of learning each day.

Thank you,  
Sarah Leveque