Georgia Appleseed  
Center for Law and Justice  
Senate Bill 164 – What you need to know.

Senate Bill 164 encourages local boards of education to implement Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) programs and initiatives in their schools, particularly high need schools. High need schools are defined as public schools which have received a school climate rating of ‘1-star’ or ‘2-stars’. Additionally, the bill authorizes the State Board of Education to provide funds to local school systems to support PBIS and RTI programs, initiatives and personnel and to establish rules and regulations for PBIS and RTI programs and initiatives. Senate Bill 164 amended section 20-2-741 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated-effective July 1, 2015.

School Climate Star Rating  
Georgia is the first state in the nation to include school climate as an early indicator in its academic accountability system. School climate is a measure of student, teacher, and parent perception of a school’s climate and the congruency between the three. The School Climate Star Rating is a diagnostic tool to determine if a school is on the right path to school improvement. Each school will receive a star rating between one star and five stars, with five stars representing an excellent school climate.

PBIS & RTI  
The State of Georgia Department of Education (and other local school districts) adopted a positive climate changing framework called PBIS. The goal of the PBIS framework is to teach students expected behavior, positively reinforce good behavior, and to use collected data to assess and manage the school’s approach to student discipline.

"Students cannot learn in environments that do not support them. Georgia is committed to measuring the quality of its learning climates, and this aligned approach helps us assess that quality from preschool all the way through 12th grade."  
- Richard Woods,  
Georgia School Superintendent

RTI is a framework that identifies and addresses the academic and behavioral needs of students through a tiered system. “The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning,” states the RTI network. These services are provided by general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. For RTI to be successful, students must receive high-quality, research based instruction, ongoing student assessment, parent involvement and tiered instruction. There are 3 different tiers. In Tier 1 students receive high-quality instruction, and they are screened to establish a baseline and identify any struggling learners. This typically lasts 8 weeks and after that period students who have progressed are returned to the regular classroom program. Tier 2 is for those students who are still not progressing in Tier 1. Those students will receive increased instruction to meet their needs. Students who continue to show little progress will continue to Tier 3, and receive individualized, intensive instructions. If necessary, students may be referred to special education services.