

2.3.2: Intervention Strategies

Consistent with the Board philosophy of a continuum of service and early intervention, there is a process for observation, discussion, diagnosis and action related to students who are at risk for learning difficulties. It is hoped that early intervention will enhance the learning skills of students and increase school success. The following chart provides a visual summary of the process, with subsequent pages outlining the implementation of steps prior to, and potentially leading up to, a referral to an Identification Placement and Review Committee.

Similar steps are followed for students who demonstrate need for additional challenge or enrichment.

Intervention Strategies Prior to IPRC

“Steps to Success” Referral Process to Special Services

Step 1

If a student is experiencing difficulty:

- The teacher gathers data to assist in decisions regarding the student’s programs. The teacher should speak with the parent, staff who have worked with the student, and examine past records (Ontario Student Record). Past records would provide information regarding attendance, prior assessments, involvement with support services, and any pertinent medical considerations.
- In addition to the background information gathered the classroom teacher will record classroom observations relating to skill development, work habits, and general strengths and needs. Information regarding peer and adult relations and social skills may also be helpful.
- As the classroom teacher gathers the data, appropriate accommodations (e.g. preferential seating, more time to complete work, re-teaching, use of concrete material, additional work on phonemic awareness, etc.) to the child’s program will be made in consultation with the student’s parents/guardians. Once accommodations have been implemented, the student’s progress is monitored.

Step 2

If the student continues to experience difficulty:

- The teacher keeps the parent/guardian informed about steps being taken and strategies being used.
- The classroom teacher consults with the resource teacher to review the data gathered to date and to explore additional strategies and accommodations.
- Following these recommendations, the teacher continues to monitor and record student progress.

Step 3

If the student continues to have difficulty:

- The classroom teacher discusses the situation with the parent/guardian.
- The teacher makes a referral (Appendix 2.3.8) to the next school team meeting. The purpose of the School-based Team meeting is to determine an appropriate course of action for students who may need support beyond the regular classroom. Members of the school team may include the school administrator, resource teacher, classroom teacher, and others as appropriate (e.g., Special Education Coordinator, Psychoeducational Clinician, etc.).
- The classroom teacher discusses the accommodations with the parent/guardians.
- Following the meeting the classroom teacher implements suggested accommodations. Some curriculum modifications might be appropriate (e.g. reduction in the number of expectations, slower pace, or alternative materials) to ensure that students are receiving instruction at the appropriate level.
- As adjustments are made the classroom teacher monitors and records progress.

Step 4

If the student is still experiencing difficulty:

- The parent/guardian is contacted to inform them of the need to gather more information and of the Resource Teacher’s involvement in conducting an informal assessment.
- A referral is made through the Resource Teacher for academic testing in order to have more thorough information in relation to the student’s level of achievement and skill development. The Resource Teacher may use a variety of assessments, which may include the Brigance and Canadian Achievement Test. Once this data has been gathered additional modifications may be suggested.
- The classroom teacher discusses the accommodations/modifications with the parent/guardian.
- Following the meeting the classroom teacher implements suggested accommodations/modifications.
- As adjustments are made the classroom teacher monitors and records progress.

Step 5

If the student continues to experience difficulty:

- The student will again be discussed by the school team.

- Parents/guardians are kept informed of the student's progress and the strategies, accommodations and modifications that are being used, and the need to take further action.
- Upon reviewing the steps taken to date and adjustments that have occurred the school team, in consultation with the parent/guardian, may consider some of the following options:
 - Regular Resource Support
 - Develop an Individual Education Plan
 - Further Data Collection (e.g. academic assessments, student observations, etc.)
 - Continue to monitor student progress
 - Consult with parent regarding an outside referral (e.g. community agency, medical assessment, etc.)
 - Consult with Special Education Co-ordinator
 - Referral to Speech and Language Services (Appendix 2.3.11)
 - Consultation and referral to Psychological Services Department (e.g. Psycho-Educational Assessment, Counselling)
 - Referral to IPRC
- Conferences are held involving School-based Team, Parent, Psychoeducational Clinician, Itinerant Staff (i.e., Behaviour, High Needs).
- Wrap-Around Meetings with School-based Teams, Community Agencies, Parent, Psychoeducational Clinician, Itinerant Staff.

“Steps to Success” Referral Process for Enrichment

Step 1

If a student demonstrates a need for additional challenges in learning experiences:

- The teacher gathers data to assist in decisions regarding the student's programs. The teacher should speak with the parent, staff who have worked with the student, and examine past records (Ontario Student Record). Past records would provide information regarding attendance, prior assessments, involvement with support services, and any pertinent medical considerations.
- In addition to the background information gathered the classroom teacher will record classroom observations relating to skill development, work habits, and general strengths and needs. Information regarding peer and adult relations and social skills may also be helpful.
- As the classroom teacher gathers the data, appropriate accommodations and extensions to the child's program will be made in consultation with the student's parents/guardians. Once these have been implemented the student's progress is monitored.

Step 2

The teacher continues to monitor and assess the student's needs

- The teacher keeps the parent/guardian informed about steps being taken and strategies being used.
- The classroom teacher could consult with the resource teacher and enrichment team to review the data gathered to date and to explore additional strategies.

Step 3

In Grade 4, achievement and ability tests will be administered to provide further information about the student's strengths and needs. The student may then be selected for one or more of the following elementary program options based on OLSAT results.

- Classroom enrichment
- Enrichment opportunities
- Core program (formal identification through IPRC)

Step 4

Beyond Grade 4, students demonstrating a need for extended programming may result in the school-based team requesting further enrichment testing.

“Steps to Success” Function of the School-Based Team

Purpose:

- For staff to collaborate in order to determine an appropriate course of action for identified and non-identified pupils with special needs
- To develop or revise the Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- To implement recommendations from IPRC and collaboratively develop programs to address strengths and needs as determined by the IPRC

Members:

- School Administrator (Chair), Resource Teacher, Classroom Teacher(s)
- Others as appropriate (e.g. Special Education Co-ordinator, Behaviour Counsellor)

TYPES OF MEETINGS:

Overview/Review Meetings:

- Scheduled regularly (three to four times per year - generally early in the year and near the end of each term)
- To review the resource caseload in each class - both identified and non-identified students with special needs
- To review the progress and status of the program of each student on resource caseload in each class
- To discuss grouping, strategies and modifications within the classroom
- To discuss potential referrals for assessment, program, Psychological Services, IPRC
- Record details of discussion and decisions on the referral or on the School-based Team tracking form; be sure to indicate “who does what”

Specific Purpose Meetings:

- Scheduled as required at the request of any School-based Team member for an individual student in order to:
 - Initiate a new program
 - Change program or course of action
 - Discuss new information or developments
 - Revise the IEP
- May be requested:
 - When the Resource Teacher has completed an assessment
 - When a report is received from Psychological Services
 - when parents have questions regarding progress
 - At critical points in the program
 - For a student new to the school
 - Prior to or after an IPRC
- Parents may be invited as appropriate
- Record details of discussions and decisions on the referral or on the School-based Team tracking form; be sure to indicate “who does what”

Steps to Effective Communication

Education is a shared experience involving the home and school. It can be strengthened by open communications by everyone involved.

Should a parent or guardian have a question, require information, or have concerns about their child’s education they are encouraged to:

Contact the **classroom teacher** first and discuss the situation.

If necessary, contact the **principal** next and request help in dealing with the matter.

If necessary, contact the **Special Education Coordinator** for your school.

If necessary, contact the **Superintendent** in charge of the school involved.

If necessary, contact the **Director** who is the Chief Education Officer for the Board.

If necessary, contact your local **Trustee**.

Calm and effective communication strategies ensure a positive experience for everyone involved with the student's education.