

Procedural Guidelines
Used to
Transition A Student From Their Home School
To A Self-Contained Classroom
And Back Home Again

Adopted by the Cooperative's Superintendent's Advisory Board

12/22/04

Introduction to the Transition Steps To and From a Students Home School

The following guidelines and forms in addendum have been developed by Cooperative staff and approved by the Cooperative's Superintendent Advisory Committee on 12/22/04. The purpose of this user-friendly packet is to provide building teams with the tools to navigate consistently and comprehensively through the necessary steps to transition a student from his home school to a more restrictive classroom placement. This process includes an exit plan and transition plans at the time of the new placement to insure that both sending and receiving staff, administration, the student and the students parents clearly understand the criteria that will be required in order for the student to be recommended to return to their home school.

Students potentially being considered for a more restrictive placement typically are receiving services in a resource room. Because of the unique challenges some students present Iep teams develop and/or amend behavior plans, try new strategies/interventions, begin increasing resource room time, meet with parents more often, meet with ancillary staff e.g. school psychologist, social worker more often, and consult with local services providers and law enforcement representatives more often. As the efforts of Iep teams increase to assist the student to be as successful as possible, the amount of time spent in the resource room setting generally increases. This process changes the student's service time from less service to more service resulting in a more restrictive placement in their home school setting. Usually, at some point in time a balance in services and service time resolve the concerns of the team. Occasionally, the end result remains less than desired by the team and the parents. It is in these instances when this packet is to be provided to all team members for review and to provide an understanding of what needs to be done next in a series of sequential steps.

A placement in one of the Cooperative's most restricted placements, known as our self-contained classrooms, usually results in a series of small improvements for students. Overnight success is seldom seen. Over a period of years students develop behavioral patterns, coping mechanisms, patterns of manipulation and negative self-destructive behaviors, which typically fade slowing. Over time these trends and patterns of behavior must be replaced with appropriate strategies, interventions and new "replacement" behaviors. Change here is generally slow but gradual. The partnership developed between parents and school employees is a vital link in the successful return of a student to their home school. Recent history of students served in our most restrictive placements reveals many success stories.

Your team is on one end or the other of the spectrum of services provided to a student. You are either determining if a more restrictive placement is needed or you are considering a recommendation to return a student to their home school. Good luck to all of you as you make an effort to make a difference in a child's life.

Director of the Special Services Cooperative of Wameg0
(12/22/04)

Transitional Steps To and From a Students Home School

Guidelines

Steps a Building Needs to Take to Transfer a Student to an Alternative Placement:

1. Referral recommendations are an IEP TEAM process involving the following
 - a. the school psychologist assigned to the students current building will consult with the Director of Special Ed to review the steps that follow.
 - b. student has been observed at least once by self-contained teacher and a consultation between self-contained teacher and resource room teacher has occurred
 - c. student has exhibited a history of challenging behaviors (documented over the past 4-6 months)
 - d. student has a behavior plan which has exhausted all options to include a functional behavior assessment and manifestation determination hearing (if it reached this point-the 10 day suspension lid)
 - e. student has progressed through the continuum of services available (from less time to more than 60% time in the resource room) therefore reaching the point of consideration/recommendation for a self-contained placement.
 - f. *a pre-referral meeting (with Coop staff and principals only) is strongly encouraged. Presenting documentation materials (listed in "g" below) should be as complete as possible, from sending team members, and shared with receiving team members prior to the meeting in order for the receiving team to have "sufficient time to review such". ("Sufficient time to review such," is at least 3-working days prior to the meeting date.)*
 - g. referral meeting and official notification to parents and all other school personnel with a need to know status will be coordinated by school psychologist assigned to the building the student currently attends. Members invited should include the student's current IEP team and potential team members at the student's new building (to include the principal, self-contained teacher, social worker and school psychologist). Director of Special Services is to be invited. Representatives from other agencies working with the student should also be invited. The student should also be in attendance.
 - h. agenda for the meeting should contain the following topics and data (see example in addendum)
 1. documentation from a variety of teachers and settings of behaviors that are potentially endangering to self or others, behaviors that interfere with the teachers ability to teach or behaviors that are not conducive for other students to learn in the classroom(s).
 2. documentation of para-educator usage
 3. documentation of the # of office referrals
 4. documentation of the # of ISS and OSS referrals

5. documentation regarding the # of times the IEP team has met and the # of meetings held with the parent(s)
6. documentation of the functional behavioral assessment and manifestation determination hearing (if it reaches this point-the 10 day suspension lid).
7. documentation of failing grades, absenteeism, tardies and/or bus referrals

i. packet sent to receiving school w/ notice

2. If the team decision is to move the student to a self-contained placement, then

a. the student will remain at current placement until the following steps are taken

1. start date is mutually agreed upon at I.E.P./Change of Placement meeting
2. the parent(s) and student have an opportunity to visit the new school and classroom, but not prior to the above steps being taken
3. records required to be available at the office are available at the new school, to include arrangements for lunch tickets, emergency contact person(s) for example.
4. transportation arrangements are confirmed with all parties by the Director of Sp. Ed.
5. *a new IEP and placement forms are required to be completed. The re-writing of the IEP is considered to be a collaborative effort between sending and receiving team members. For example, the new draft IEP can be completed by the sending case manager or jointly between the sending and receiving case managers. The need for a new IEP arises because typically several amendments to adjust time and the behavior plan occur. In addition to the above step, support efforts will be provided by the SPED office. Receiving team members will be added as auxiliary (provider) personnel to the MIS system so they can have input into the IEP re-write. Members to be added need to be discussed and confirmed at the pre-meeting. Once the new draft of the IEP is completed and reviewed by all parties then it should be signed off on by all appropriate personnel and the parents*
 - a. the new IEP will contain an exit plan (a plan detailing what performance standards the student needs to accomplish in order to become eligible/recommended to return to his/her neighborhood school). The exit plan will be provided to the Director and to the neighborhood schools resource teacher, s. psychologist, social worker and principal.
 - b. Any follow-up meeting held should include the invitation (by official notice) of designated individuals from the sending school

3. Students that transfer into the Coop with an active IEP identifying a self-contained BD/ED placement will attend the Coop's most appropriate BD/ED self-contained placement and will be required to meet the criteria to follow, under the heading of, Steps To Be Taken For A Student To Return To Their Home School.
4. According to policy set forth by the Cooperatives' Superintendent Advisory Board at its February meeting in 2004, "Any student that is placed in an alternative setting, prior to September 20th the home district is responsible for those state assessment scores. If the student remains in the self-contained placement the next year, the alternative school becomes responsible for the testing and for those scores."

Steps To Be Taken For A Student To Return To Their Home School

1. All of the heretofore steps apply. Should there be a need for clarification regarding who is to do what, please contact the Director. Once again, the recommendation to return a student to his/her home school is a TEAM decision made at an Official IEP meeting. The documentation listed heretofore is once again required to be on the agenda. This list should also include the replacement behaviors observed. The alternative team also needs to document that the student progressed from a most restrictive placement to the least restrictive placement over a reasonable period of time (at least 1-2 nine weeks periods consecutively).
 - a. referral meeting and official notification to parents will be coordinated by school psychologist assigned to the building the student currently attends. Members invited should include the student's current IEP team and potential team members at the student's new building (to include the principal, self-contained teacher, social worker and school psychologist). Director of Special Services is to be invited. Representatives from other agencies working with the student should also be invited. The student should also be in attendance.

Out-Of-District Students Transferring to our Cooperative with an Active IEP Disclosing Their Previous Placement as Self-Contained:

Such students will continue services in the self-contained classroom best suited to their age/grade level peers. If the receiving IEP does not clearly specify an exit plan the case manager will convene an official IEP meeting to define such with parents, the student and other IEP team members. The exit plan will then be used as a guide to determine the students, return to their home district.