**PRE-REFERRAL**

The Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) for general education students is intended

as a primary way in which general education teachers or specialists can assist a student

who is at risk for school problems within the general education environment. I&RS

programs are not intended to replace traditional methods or resources for helping students

to function effectively in school. Rather, they exist primarily to focus on particular

student problems using available resources within the general education environment.

The primary purposes of the I&RS team are to identify students in need and then plan and

provide appropriate intervention for those students within the general education

community; to identify the responsibilities of building staff who participate in the

planning and provision of intervention and referral services; to actively involve

parents/guardians in the development and implementation of the I&RS plans; to review

and assess the effectiveness of the services provided in achieving the outcomes identified

in the intervention and referral plan; to provide professional development to general

education staff members who either refer students to the I&RS or who assist in providing

the intervention and referral services; and, finally, to coordinate the services of

community-based social and health agencies. An I&RS team is one of the many resources used by schools to intervene with student problems, prior to Child Study Team (CST) evaluation.

**A. THE INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES TEAM PROCESS**

**(I&RS)**

The Intervention and Referral Services Team process is a collaborative school effort

between district personnel and parents to intervene when a student has been identified as

making minimal academic and/or emotional progress in the regular education setting.

The team or committee collects and evaluates relevant data in order to determine or

identify specific barriers to student performance. Once these barriers have been

identified, individualized interventions are determined and implemented through an

action plan in order to alleviate the concerns. In some instances this may include the use

of the Response to Intervention Model. Although several variations of the model have

been proposed, in general RTI is based upon three components: the use of multiple tiers

of increasingly intense interventions; a problem-solving approach to identify and evaluate

instructional strategies; and an integrated data collection and assessment system to

monitor student progress and guide decisions at every level. Student monitoring

continues throughout this process by the identified individuals in the action plan. This

process is ongoing, in that, it continues to identify and evaluate problems, solutions and

progress within the student’s academic setting.

**I&RS PHASES**

1. Request for Assistance

2. Information Collection

3. Parent/Guardian Notification and Participation

4. Problem Solve

5. Develop I&RS Action Plan

6. Support, Monitor and Continue the Process

7. Problem resolved or referral to CST

If the I&RS process exhausts all of the available school based regular education

interventions with minimal success, often, the student is referred to the CST for a

comprehensive evaluation in order to gather additional information as well as to

determine if the student is eligible for special education and related services. The

recommendation for a CST evaluation could come directly from the I&RS team or from

the parent at any time during the process.

**B. WHAT INTERVENTION IS AND IS NOT**

The term intervention is used when teachers and other school personnel study and

creatively problem solve educational issues that place a student at risk for school failure.

Using a team approach that also significantly involves parents, each school carefully

considers the needs of students who are identified “at risk” for learning, behavior, and

health problems. After careful consideration, strategies are put in place to work with the

student and effectively address the issues at hand.

By its nature, intervention is a process. It is often the case that plans are revisited and

modified. In most cases, however, a successful intervention plan which is created and

shaped over a period of time proves to be a powerful method tool for the at-risk student.

If successful, it is preferable to special education referral which requires a student to have

an identified disability and undergo an evaluation.

In some cases, intervention is not successful and a referral for special education is

deemed necessary. Even in these cases, the prior period of intervention is valuable. Prior

intervention will illustrate that a referral is appropriate (as required by law) and it will

help inform the IEP team about strategies that have or have not produced success when it

comes time to develop the written IEP.