

**LINCOLN SCHOOL
HASBROUCK HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

A Guide to Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS)

What is Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS)?

I&RS is a state mandated system of clearly defined steps that are taken to assist a struggling student in improving educational outcomes. These steps are taken by a multi-disciplinary team which meets, regularly, to monitor the success of students identified through the referral process, as needing specific academic and/or behavior “interventions” in order to be successful. These interventions are monitored over a period of time and may be modified, enhanced or discontinued as indicated by the needs of the student involved. The I&RS team aids students in the general education program, but also provides support for students determined to be in need of special education programs.

What is the purpose of I&RS?

- Identify learning, behavior and health difficulties of students
- Collect thorough information on the identified learning, behavior and health difficulties
- Develop and implement action plans which provide for appropriate school or community interventions or referrals to school and community resources, based on the collected data and desired outcomes for the identified learning, behavior and health difficulties
- Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who identify learning, behavior and health difficulties
- Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who participate in each building's system for planning and providing intervention and referral services
- Actively involve parents or guardians in the development and implementation of intervention and referral services action plan

How can we determine if a student needs to be referred to the I&RS Team?

If a student exhibits specific observable behaviors that indicate that he or she is experiencing learning, behavior or health difficulties, he or she may benefit from a referral to the I&RS Team.

Prereferral

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.

What are the steps that are taken in the I&RS process?

- 1) Request for I&RS intervention;
- 2) I&RS meeting is held;
- 3) Action Plan is designed and implemented; and,
- 4) Action Plan is monitored and reviewed; this plan is revised, expanded or discontinued depending on need.

The Intervention and Referral Services process is a collaborative effort between school personnel and families targeting identified needs for students who are making minimal academic and/or behavioral progress in the regular education setting. Using a team approach we carefully consider the needs of students who are identified at risk for learning, behavior, and/or health problems. The team 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, implemented and documented. By its nature, intervention is a process, not a procedure. After six to eight weeks of interventions being implemented, the committee meets again to revisit and modify the action plans as needed. In most cases, a successful I&RS action plan which is created and shaped over a period of time proves to be a powerful tool for the student at risk.

Who participates in the I&RS process?

The regulations requiring I&RS allows the building I&RS teams to be as flexible as necessary in order to perform the necessary functions. Typically, the following individuals participate:

- o Principal and Teacher
- o Support staff: School Counselor, Nurse, Learning Disabilities Consultant; Psychologist; Social Worker
- o Other: Parent; Community Agency Representative

What happens if the I&RS Plan succeeds or does not succeed?

If the I&RS Plan is successful in meeting the needs of the student, then the Plan may continue to be maintained and monitored or the Plan may be discontinued. If the I&RS Plan is not successful, then additional information is collected, additional professional advice is secured and additional resources are identified. In some instances referral to a basic skills or a special education program may be necessary.

What Role do Parents Play?

Parents/guardians may refer their son or daughter to the I&RS team. Regardless of who requests assistance for a student, the parent/guardian is asked to be involved in the process. There is a questionnaire and/or interview that the parents will participate in with a team member. Parental involvement in this process is important since parents play a major role in a child's developmental and learning process.

Accommodations: Techniques and materials that allow disabled individuals to complete school or work with greater ease and effectiveness. Examples include spellcheckers, tape recorders, and expanded time for completing assignments.

Action Plan: A written action plan is a crucial component of the I&RS process. After the team completes the brainstorming step in the problem-solving process, the next step is to evaluate and refine possible intervention strategies for achieving the desired behavioral objective. The team, including the person who requested assistance, should discuss the feasibility and effectiveness of each strategy in achieving the objective, based on available resources, student strengths, and teacher skill. The person requesting assistance, with the help of the team, chooses the intervention strategies that he or she believes will be most successful in meeting the behavioral objective.

The action plan should list the chosen intervention strategies and also detail who will be responsible for implementation of each strategy, a timeline for implementation, and the person(s) responsible for supporting the implementers. Any staff who will be responsible for implementing the action plan should be included in the action planning process.

Affective : People's motivation, decision-making styles, values and emotional preferences will also help to define their learning styles.

Annual Review: The I&RS files are a significant collection of comprehensive data on educational issues in the building. An analysis of these data can facilitate an objective review of educational concerns. For example, based on a review of I&RS data a team might discover that it was able to review 24 cases out of 63 total requests for assistance in the previous school year. Based on this information, the team might consider examining the following areas: the efficiency of its practices; whether all appropriate resources were appropriately utilized; whether school staff were timely in their responses to requests for information; or whether additional meeting time, added staff or an adjusted meeting schedule is necessary to address a larger portion of the requests for assistance next school year.

Behavior Modification: A technique intended to alter behavior by positive reinforcement (rewarding desirable actions) and extinguishing undesirable actions.

Case Manager: Is a member from the I&RS who is assigned to oversee all the proper documentations are received and maintained. This will be the primary contact person for the teacher to follow up with.

Cognition: How one acquires knowledge.

Conceptualization: How one processes information. There are those who are always looking for connections among unrelated events. For others, each event triggers a multitude of new ideas.

Decoding: The process of acquiring meaning from spoken, written, or printed symbols used in receptive language.

Differentiate Instructions: is teaching with student variance in mind. It means starting where the kids are rather than adopting a standardized approach to teaching that seems to presume that all learners of a given age or grade are essentially alike. Thus differentiated instruction is "responsive" teaching rather than "one-size-fits-all" teaching. A teacher proactively plans varied approaches to what students need to learn, how they will learn it, and/or how they can express what they have learned in order to increase the likelihood that each student will learn as much as he or she can as efficiently as possible

Encoding: spelling

Expressive Language: Communication through speech, writing, and/or gestures.

Fine Motor Skills: The use of small muscles to complete precise tasks such as writing, drawing, buttoning, opening jars, and assembling puzzles.

General Education: An educational program which follows the general education programs which follow the core curriculum content standards.

Gross Motor Skills: The use of large muscles for activities involving strength and balance, such as walking, running and climbing.

I & RS: Intervention and Referral Services is a coordinated system in each school building where general education students are served that uses a multidisciplinary team approach for the planning and delivery of services to assist students experiencing learning, behavior or health difficulties and to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing student's learning, behavior or health needs.

Learning Styles: The ways in which a student best understands and retains information, e.g., vision, hearing, movement, kinesthetic, or a combination. Learning style-specific approaches to assessment or instruction emphasize the variations in temperament, attitude, and preferred reflective/impulsive, or verbal/spatial dimensions.

Modifications: is to make an adjustment or change to something.

Objective: is a joint action by a group of people, putting efforts or actions to attain or accomplish a goal. The most effective teamwork is produced when all the individuals involved harmonize their contributions and work towards a common goal.

Parent Involvement: It is the participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other social activities that play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.

Prior Interventions: A procedure in which staff members and parents develop intervention strategies to assist a student who is having difficulty in learning, behavior or socialization to function in the general education classroom.

Questionnaires: Questionnaires are a commonly used measure of outcomes. The particular questions used to measure an outcome must be chosen with care

Transition: A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Transition services for students with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or related services, if required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

Phonics: Letter-sound relationships; a set of instructional strategies that brings a child's attention to parts of words, including syllables, phonograms (e.g. – at, -ick, etc.) and single letters.

Problem solving: The act of identifying and defining a problem, exploring options, and selecting possible solutions; the skills students need to become proficient as they read, write and interact.

Reading approaches: The many roads to meaning; ways to help students of all reading abilities and learning styles gain a meaningful understanding of what they're reading.