

Child Study Team Services 101



Learning Knows No Bounds

Prior Interventions

Background

- The NJ State Board of Education established that the main mission of schools is to enhance students achievement in a learning environment that is safe and disciplined.
- The mission is made more complex due to the diverse needs of the students who are enrolled in the districts.

Prior Interventions – Cont.

- To help with these difficulties, the NJ Department of Education (NJ DOE) provided a school program of intervention and referral services (I&RS).
- The intent of the I&RS program is to help students and staff with strategies to facilitate educational, emotional, behavioral, and health difficulties.

Prior Interventions – Cont.

- District BOE' s are required to:
 - “...*establish and implement a coordinated system in each school building for the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services that are designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties...*” [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 (a)]; and which are designed to:
 - “*assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students’ learning, behavior, or health needs.*” [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 (a)]

Prior Interventions – Cont.

- Intervention in the general education setting shall be provided to students exhibiting academic difficulties and shall be utilized *prior* to referring a student for an evaluation of eligibility for special education and related services.
- The I&RS team is one of the several resources utilized by schools to intervene with student problems *prior* to a referral to the Child Study Team.

Purpose

- The I&RS shall be provided to aid pupils in the general education program and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:46-18.1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1 et seq., may be provided to pupils who have been determined to be in need of special education programs and services.
- The I&RS provided for pupils who have been determined to be in need of special education programs and services shall be coordinated with the pupil's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, as appropriate.

Responsibility of I&RS

- The I&RS is a general education initiative rather than a special education program.
- It is primarily intended to be used to assist general education staff to help expand their skills and abilities to successfully accommodate the needs of general education students who are at risk for school failure.

Participants in the I&RS Process

- Core I&RS Team
 - Principal
 - Regular teaching staff member
 - Educational services staff member who referred pupil
 - Other staff member as may be required to assist of study that issue.
- Parent/Guardian – alerted that a request for assistance has been made. Shall be offered an opportunity to participate in development and implementation of I&RS action plan.
 - *Notice may be waived by law when protecting abused students and the confidentiality of persons seeking drug or alcohol rehabilitation
- Additional Ad Hoc School Staff - *expertise as needed
 - *Matching appropriate expertise to the identified educational issues of academics, behavior and school health

Overview of I&RS Process

Request for Assistance
(Appropriate documentation included)



I&RS Meeting Scheduled



Problem Resolving Process

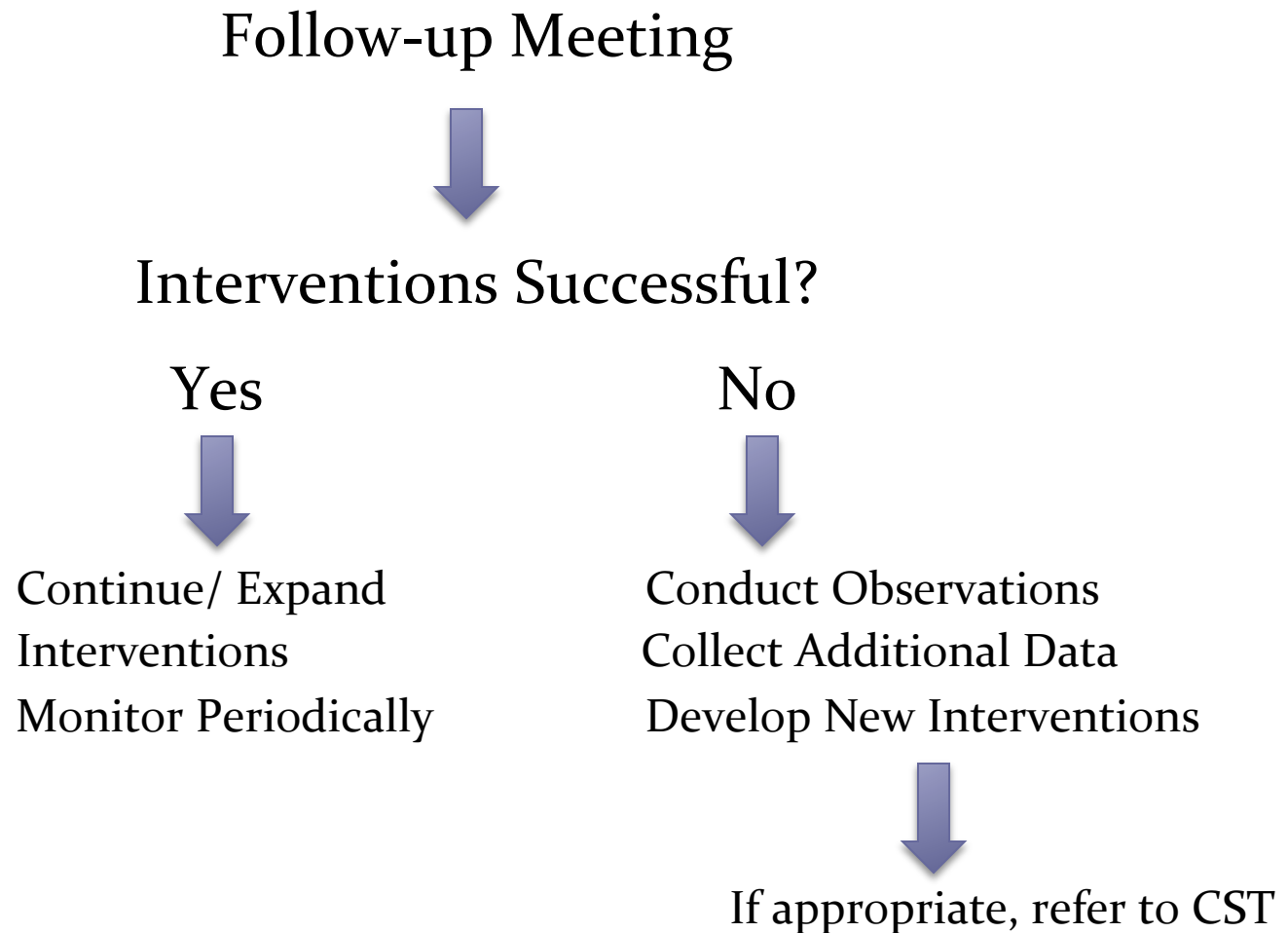
Problem identified

Action plan goal created

Identify who implements action plan goals

Follow-up date planned

Overview of I&RS Process



Prior Interventions

- Through analysis of relevant documentation and data of *each intervention utilized*, it has been demonstrated that the programs in the general education setting (or the Section 504 strategies) have not addressed the education difficulties of the student, and it is believed that the student may have a disability, then the student shall be referred for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services.

Initial Referral Process

- A direct referral to CST may be made if the nature of the student's educational problem(s) is such that evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services is warranted without **delay** (Location, Referral and Identification, NJ Administration Code, Title 6A, Chapter 14, Special Education 6A:14-3.3, p.46)
- There is documentation to indicate such urgency (Frequent I&RS or Section 504 review)

Initial Referral Process – Cont.

- Shall include:
 - Referral by instructional, administrative, and other professional staff of the school district, parent, and state agencies;
 - Utilized strategies and collected data, with dates, identified through the I&RS and Section 504, showing the effectiveness of those strategies as well as other general education strategies;

Initial Referral Process – Cont.

- Review of existing data
 - This is where the *data from I&RS and Section 504* is valuable and important
- Information provided by parents, teachers, and related service providers
- Current classroom based assessments and observations
- Any other additional data needed to determine whether testing is warranted or not

Initial Referral Process – Cont.

- Once all the data has been reviewed and discussions have occurred at the initial planning meeting, and it have been demonstrated that despite prior interventions, the student continues to struggle and demonstrated a possible learning disability, a determination to evaluate will be done.

Members of the Core CST

- **School Psychologist:**
 - Assesses the cognitive development of a student or their Intellectual Quotient (IQ)
- **Learning Disability Teacher Consultant (LDT-C):**
 - Assesses the academic subject content areas for strengths and weaknesses
- **School Social Worker:**
 - Reviews the developmental history, family dynamics, home environment, and other social/emotional concerns

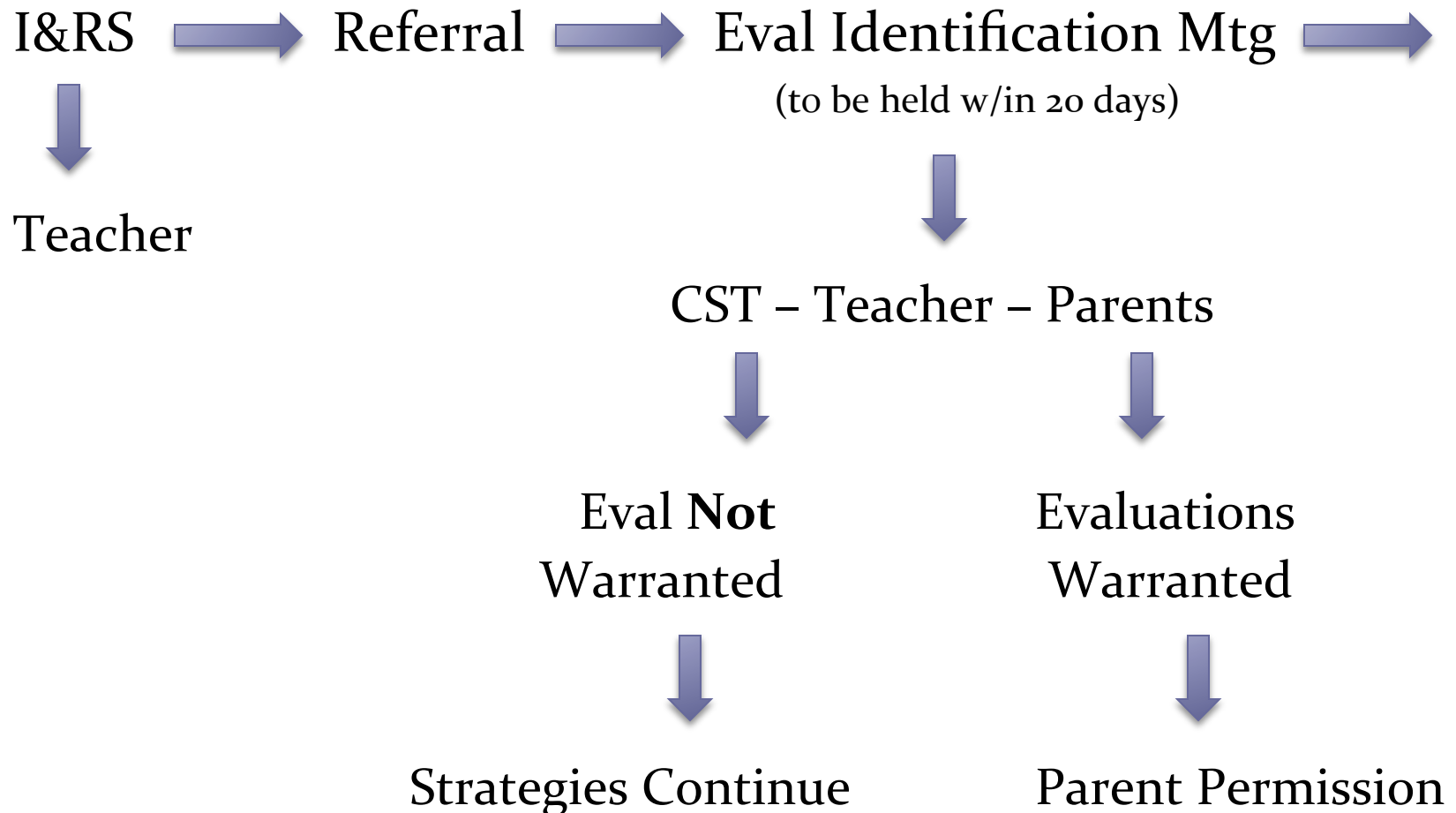
Additional CST Members:

- **Speech Language Pathologists:**
 - *Assesses the student's articulation, expressive and receptive language, voice and speech fluency*

- **Other Related Service Providers:**
 - **Occupational Therapist:**
 - *Assesses fine and gross motor skills, visual perception, visual-motor, sensory profile*

 - **Physical Therapist:**
 - *Assesses mobility and strength as it relates to navigating the school environment.*

Initial Referral Process – Cont.



Initial Referral Process – Cont.



Eligibility

State Mandated Criteria Includes:

1. The student has one or more disabilities defined in the NJ Administrative Code
2. The disability adversely affects the student's educational performance
3. The student is in need of special education and related services as a result of the disability.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- An IEP is reviewed every year, usually 15 days prior to the end of the current IEP so that no lap of services occurs
- Every three years a re-evaluation of a student is suggested by Code to determine continued eligibility for special education and related services.
 - A re-evaluation can occur sooner if needed or requested