



The
**STUDENT
INTERVENTION
PROGRAM**

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of SIP teams is to provide educational alternatives and support to teachers and students. There are many reasons why students have learning and behavioral difficulties in school. Some students have poor motivation, instruction not matched with their skill levels, chronic absences or transiency, or health related problems that may affect school performance. Using a collaborative problem-solving approach the Student Intervention Program (SIP) team can help to:

- Redefine and describe the educational concern.
- Provide additional data collection and analysis.
- Create or refine corrective instructional and behavioral strategies.
- Provide hands-on support to the teacher requesting assistance.
- Provide on-going progress monitoring of implemented interventions.
- Make recommendations based on objective information.

SIP teams also help with other educational decisions:

- Develop reasonable accommodations under Section 504.
- Consider the appropriateness of grade retention.
- Provide assistance to students needing behavioral or crisis intervention.
- Support students with identified disabilities.

FOUR MAIN FEATURES OF SIP

Feature One: Team Problem Solving

The SIP team is comprised of general education teachers. As needed, consulting members such as the school psychologist, principal, school nurse, and special education teacher also periodically participate. The teacher requesting assistance is also a member of the team. The primary benefits of the *team problem solving* feature of SIP is that it

- Improves the chances of finding an effective solution.
- Reduces teacher burnout by sharing responsibility for the student.

Feature Two: Problem Clarification

Requests for assistance are often vague statements of the presenting problem. The problem clarification feature enables the SIP team to gain a complete understanding of the presenting problem, which in turn leads to more effective interventions.

Feature Three: Intervention

The SIP team collaborates to generate ideas for intervention. This feature of SIP

- Provides tools to design and build effective interventions.
- Provides hands-on support to the teacher requesting assistance.
- Specifies resources and techniques that can be used to develop an intervention.

Feature Four: Documentation

The SIP process provides an effective means for the teacher to document interventions used to address the concern. This feature of SIP

- Establishes accountability.
- Encourages follow-through.
- Provides a means to monitor progress and evaluate student performance.

THE STUDENT AT RISK

The school district offers a variety of formal intervention programs for students at-risk for school failure. The Title One Program, Reading Improvement Program, Project Life, and various special education programs are a few examples. Each of these programs has specific entry criteria that must be met in order for a student to receive services. The result of this limitation is that some students do not qualify for these formal programs, and yet are still in need of assistance.

Examples of students who may not meet formal eligibility criteria follow:

Underachievers

These students demonstrate poor achievement motivation and do not achieve up to their ability.

Chronically Unavailable for Learning

These students are capable of learning but make poor progress because of a lack of opportunity to learn due to chronic absences, truancy, or transiency.

Students With Disabilities Not Covered Under Special Education

Guidelines

These students may have a mild hearing or vision loss, Attention Deficit Disorder with or without Hyperactivity, or other health related problems that may affect school performance.

Curriculum Casualties

These students are capable of making adequate academic progress but do not because instruction is not matched with their skill level.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRALS

The SIP process is not a referral to special education. A few students, after being given individualized interventions, will need more extensive services than can be provided in the general classroom setting. In such cases the SIP team documents the interventions that were provided and their outcomes. They then make a referral for further assessment knowing that their decision is based on the student's lack of progress with less intensive interventions.

The provision of interventions is a required prerequisite for many referrals, including Specific Learning Disabilities and Serious Emotional Disturbance. The Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) requires that *before* a referral to special education can be made, there must be evidence of individualized educational interventions implemented in the general education setting. NAC further requires that the special education Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) consider the appropriateness of these interventions *before* a student's eligibility for special education services under these two classifications may be determined.

PARENT REQUESTS

Sometimes a parent believes his or her child has a disability and requests a special education assessment. Parents may be unaware that alternatives exist to help meet student's needs. Taking the time to explain to a parent the intervention options available to them should lead to mutual agreement regarding the best course of action.

THE SIP PROCESS (see Fig. 1)

Typically it is the classroom teacher who starts the SIP process by being the first person to identify a significant educational concern regarding a particular student. However, other school personnel or parents can also initiate this process. The following outlines the general sequence of SIP process stages:

Stage One: Request for Assistance

When ordinary classroom accommodations fail to resolve a student concern, the teacher completes the *Request for Assistance* and *School Records Review* forms and then contacts any member of the SIP team for an informal consultation.

Stage Two: Consultation

A SIP team member or a small group of SIP team members/consultants and the teacher meet to discuss the concern, review the *Request for Assistance* and *School Records Review* forms and discuss which of three educational options to pursue:

1. Explore possible general education intervention programs such as Title One, RIP, Second Language Program, etc.
2. Develop and document interventions through the SIP process (see stage 3,) or
3. Consult with the School Psychologist about other intervention program alternatives.

Stage Three: Problem Clarification

If Option 2 was selected, then the informal consultation continues with the focus on further clarifying the concern. The SIP team member asks the teacher to describe the concern in detail, helps prioritize the problems related to the concern and determines if there is a need for additional assessment.

Stage Four: Intervention Development

Option 1. The referring teacher and case manager may choose to develop and conduct an individualized intervention before convening a SIP team meeting. If the interventions developed by the teacher and case manager are not successful, the concern could be presented to the entire SIP team to develop a comprehensive individualized intervention, or

Option 2. The referring teacher and case manager may choose to present the case to the SIP team for help in designing appropriate individualized interventions. In nearly all cases, decisions regarding special education referrals, student grade retention, and Section 504 accommodation plans should be presented to the entire SIP team.

Stage Five: Intervention Implementation

The assigned SIP case manager or chairperson provides direct and ongoing assistance to the teacher such as

- Collecting and explaining intervention materials.
- facilitating screenings, and
- monitoring student progress (see Part II: The Comprehensive Program)

Stage Six: Intervention Outcomes

After an intervention has been implemented, the outcomes are evaluated to determine further action. Each of these intervention outcomes also results in formal documentation of the concern and the interventions used to try and remediate the problem.

1. The concern is resolved—SIP activities are discontinued.
2. The concern is being resolved—SIP activities are continued.
3. The concern is unresolved—alternative SIP interventions are developed, or the matter is referred for section 504 or special education consideration. If the problem cannot be resolved in the school setting, the SIP team documents attempts to resolve the concern.

EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SIP

A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO PRINCIPALS

Many proposed school programs fail not for lack of merit but because of their implementation. One of several critical aspects regarding the successful implementation of SIP involves the leadership and administrative efforts of the principal.

Implementing SIP will cause change. This change can create confusion and frustration. While some degree of negativity can be anticipated, this reaction should not be allowed to de-rail the process. The principal's leadership during this time of transition, through public support for the program, can help teachers stay the course.

Principals must also provide administrative support to SIP. A principal has the authority to make certain decisions that can facilitate the implementation of SIP. These decisions include providing the time for staff to engage in SIP activities and making certain resources available like meeting rooms, copiers, paper, and other materials.

The kind of innovation that principals choose to implement can make a positive difference in how their schools perform. This difference is often the result of a combination of two things: visionary administrative leadership and an innovative program capable of producing positive results.