

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS)

As per the State Department of Education, The New Jersey State Board of Education has established that the primary mission of schools is to enhance student achievement of high academic standards in safe and disciplined learning environments. The effectiveness of public education in fulfilling this mission depends largely upon the capacity of school systems to respond to the diverse educational needs of students. Constantly evolving social conditions and the changing educational needs that tend to emerge with these changes can pose dramatic barriers to student achievement.

The educational mission is made more complex by the increased incidence, prevalence and intensity of problems students bring to schools. These problems include high risk behaviors, such as alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, violence, vandalism, child abuse and neglect, early sexual involvement, youth pregnancies and parenting, suicide attempts and suicides, eating disorders, low self-regard, poor socialization skills, lack of readiness for school, as well as chronic medical conditions and physical disabilities.

The types of at-risk behaviors students manifest while in school include not concentrating or focusing on learning, not completing assignments, not achieving to demonstrated skill level or tested potential, declining or failing grades, cheating, absenteeism, tardiness, falling asleep, inability to stay in seat or work within structure, decreased participation, self-defeating responses to peer pressure, deteriorating personal appearance and hygiene, erratic behavior, loss of affect, acting out, fighting, defying authority, violating rules and dropping out of school. These and other problems place students at risk for school failure and other problems, leaving parents and teachers frustrated and in need of assistance.

Per the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2(a), the required functions of the coordinated system of intervention and referral services in each school building are as follows:

- 1. Identify learning, behavior and health difficulties of students;*
- 2. Collect thorough information on the identified learning, behavior and health difficulties;*
- 3. 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;*
- 4. Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who identify learning, behavior and health difficulties;*
- 5. Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who participate in each building's system for planning and providing intervention and referral services;*
- 6. Actively involve parents or guardians in the development and implementation of intervention and referral services action plans;*

7. Coordinate the access to and delivery of school resources and services for achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans;

8. Coordinate the services of community-based social and health provider agencies and other community resources for achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans;

9. Maintain records of all requests for assistance and all intervention and referral services action plans, according to the requirements of 34 CFR Part 98, 34 CFR Part 99, 42 CFR Part II, N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-7.1, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-3.2, and N.J.A.C 6:3-2.1;

10. Review and assess the effectiveness of the provisions of each intervention and referral services action plan in achieving the outcomes identified in each action plan and modify each action plan to achieve the outcomes, as appropriate; and

11. At a minimum, annually review the intervention and referral services action plans and the actions taken as a result of the building's system of intervention and referral services and make recommendations to the principal for improving school programs and services, as appropriate.

In accordance with the regulations, The Essex County Vocational Schools has established Intervention and Referral Services Teams in each building. The teams consist of, a guidance counselor who serves as chairperson, an administrator, a school nurse, a minimum of one teacher and may also include members of the Child Study Team or the Substance Abuse Coordinator. The major function of the teams is to design and recommend interventions for pupils experiencing academic, emotional, behavioral difficulties so that they will be better able to succeed.

Pupil Referral:

A pupil who is experiencing difficulty in the classroom may be referred to the I&RS team by a staff member or by his/her parent or legal guardian. The pupil's parent or legal guardian shall be informed of any such referral. Information as to each building's I &RS Chairperson can be obtained either through the Principal or the Guidance Department

The I&RS Team shall consult with the pupil's parent (s) or legal guardian(s), teachers, and any school employee as appropriate to gather relevant information regarding the pupil's educational status, attendance, classroom behavior, and school conduct.

The school nurse shall review the pupil's health records and inform the committee of any condition relevant to the pupil's difficulties.

As appropriate, the I&RS Team may consult with community-based social and health agencies that provide services to the pupil or the pupil's family.

Intervention and Referral Action Plans

The I&RS Team shall prepare a written action plan for referred pupils who require supportive services, modifications to their regular educational program, or assessment and referral to school or community-based social and/or health provider agencies

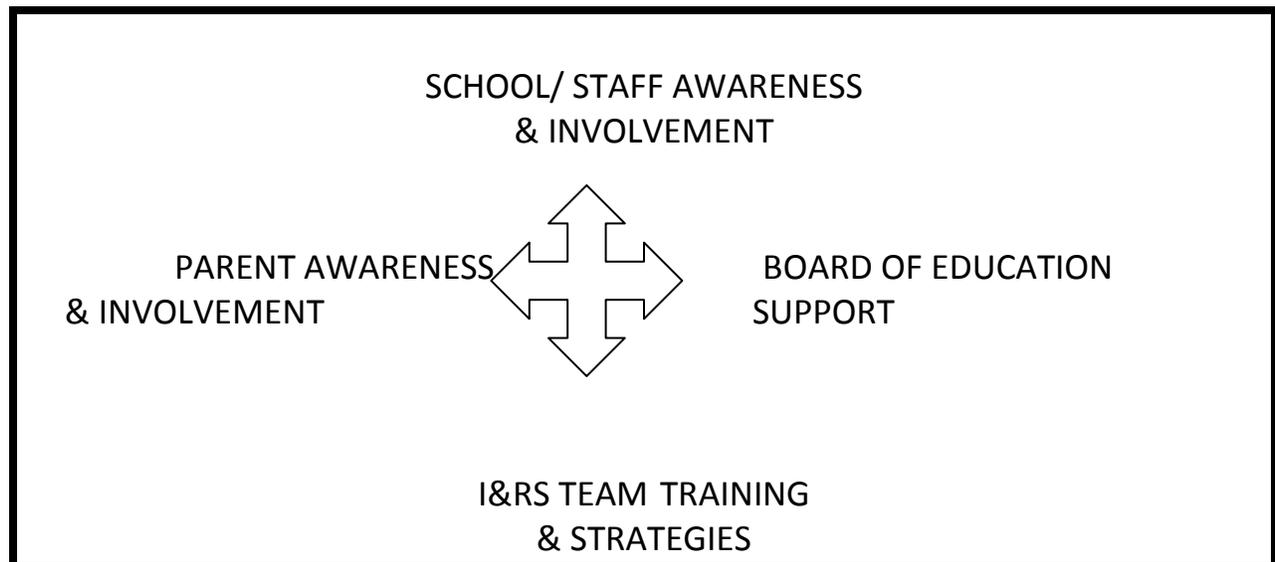
The intervention and referral services action plan shall:

- Detail any modifications in the pupil's educational program,
- List the persons who will implement the action plan
- Include any recommendations for assessments and referral to specified school or community-based social and/or health provider agencies,
- Document parental notification of the pupil's referral and any change in educational placement or the withholding of parental notification because child abuse was suspected or federal rules mandated confidentiality in an alcohol or drug related matter,
- The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) shall be actively involved in the development and implementation of any intervention and referral services action plans, and
- Identify the committee member to monitor and review the pupil's progress.
- The implementation and effectiveness of the intervention and referral services action plan shall be reviewed within eight calendar weeks from the beginning of its implementation. The committee shall consult the referring staff member for his/her assessment of the effectiveness of the plan.
- If the implementation of the action plan is determined to be ineffective, the plan shall be reviewed and amended as necessary. If the review indicates a disability, the pupil shall be referred to the Child Study Team.

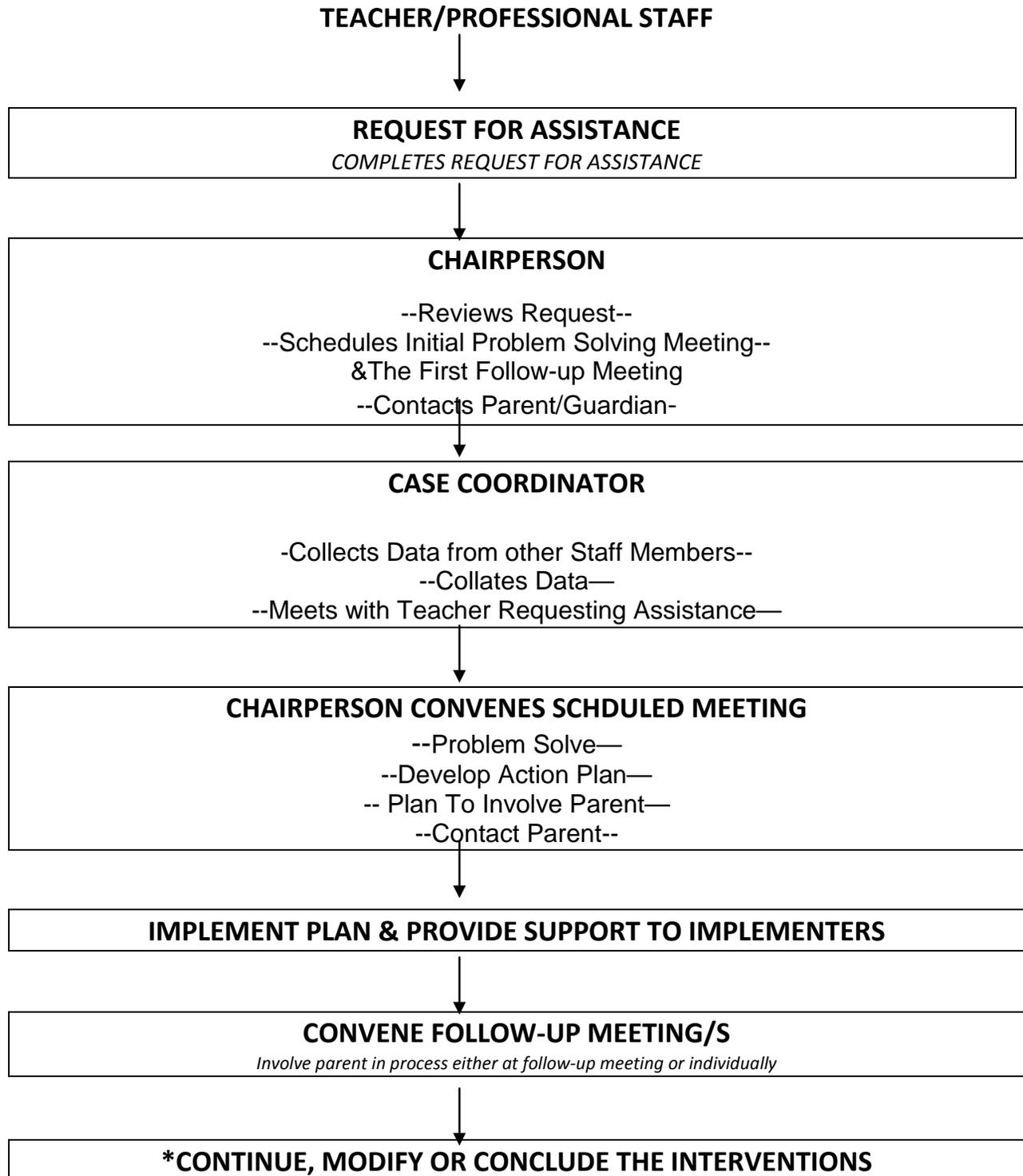
Essex County Vocational Technical Schools Intervention and Referral Services NJAC 6A:18-7.2

A comprehensive Intervention and Referral Committee serves different needs of the school and community. Proactively and reactively, this program can help students experiencing difficulty in the classroom and students identified as being at risk for negative behaviors during their school years.

A process for meeting program goals and objectives is demonstrated by the diagram below. No one component can stand alone to ensure program success.



Summary of Team Process Intervention and Referral Services



*If the student is successful with acceptable interventions in the regular education classroom, the process is continued with consultant support for the staff and student. The I&RS Team continues to review at regular intervals and monitors success and/or to amend the Action Plan. All stakeholders are notified of the meeting dates/times.

If the student is not successful with the acceptable interventions in the regular education classroom, the I&RS Team determines whether to amend the Action Plan, determine 504 eligibility, or to refer the student to the Child Study Team for evaluation..