



District Wide Staff Support Team Manual

The District Wide Staff Support Team Task Force would like to thank you for using this manual and the pre-referral process in order to better meet the learning needs of the students in your classroom. We realize that the process can be time consuming but well worth it in the end. Your dedication to the process contained in this manual will assist the team in making productive recommendations and suggestions regarding academic and behavioral interventions.

Team Members

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Comprehensive Grammar School
Marsh Grammar School
Marsh Grammar School
Tenney Grammar School
Tenney Grammar School
Timony Grammar School
Timony Grammar School
Timony Grammar School
Methuen High School

The goal of the SST Team across the district is to:

- Provide comprehensive support to teachers in their efforts to assist students in being more successful in their learning.
- Help teachers solve problems with students using the collective expertise of other appropriate professionals.
- Help teachers assist students in accessing the curriculum and make effective progress by using best practices that might include developing strategies, providing interventions, and/or accessing building/district resources.

The SST Team is not:

- A guaranteed special education referral; the team's mission is to support a teacher's work in the classroom
- A last resort when a student is up for retention or failing
- Evaluative of a teacher's practice in the classroom

Roles and Responsibilities of Team Members

The team should be a comprehensive representation of interdisciplinary members from the building.

Facilitator: organizer of time, materials, and the schedule for meetings; makes sure that the paperwork for a student referred is completed by the referring teacher; chairs each meeting.

Team Members: reviews the paperwork from the referring teacher; attends all scheduled meetings; provides recommendations for interventions and strategies; is an active participant in all aspects of the process.

Coaches (defined for SST purposes as ELA/Math/Related Service/ESL/Guidance/School Psychologist/Curriculum Coordinators): observe and provide interventions/suggestions prior to SST referral; assist referring teacher in collecting data about interventions and informal measures of assessment; put in writing their observations and assessments to be included in the referral packet prepared by the teacher.

Referring Teacher: accurately identify a struggling student through observation, curriculum based measurement, and assessment; complete the SST Referral Packet in its entirety and submit it to the Facilitator; notify parents of your intent to refer; provide adequate data for interventions; meet with the appropriate support staff; attend scheduled meetings prepared to discuss the referred student.

Timelines:

September: get to know your class; assess students to get a baseline of their current level of understanding; identify each student's learning style; read through grouping sheets (non high school students)

October: begin collecting data on students who you think are struggling significantly; meet with the appropriate support staff, i.e. coach/curriculum coordinator or school psychologist depending on the referral concern; go through the child's cumulative folder for information regarding attendance, grades, teacher's comments on report cards, previous assessments; contact the parent to express the concerns that you have; talk to previous teacher or other current teachers.

November: the SST referral process begins; complete referral packets can be turned into the Facilitator.

November through March: students can be referred throughout this period of time with supporting data for the referral; meetings will be scheduled throughout this period of time.

March: SST referrals will end on the last day of the second trimester, or the end of third quarter for high school, so that the team has ample time to meet, make suggestions, and decide upon next steps for the teacher and student.

March-June: If a student is referred after the above timelines, the team will still meet and make suggestions for intervention. The referral will be carried over to the next school year so that the receiving teacher is aware of the progress made.

Prior to Referral to SST

- Accommodations tried with data to help to define your concern
- Collection of Data: cumulative folder review, work samples, assessment data, consulted with child's prior teacher, contacted the parent to express continuing concerns, consulted with the nurse.
- Confer with Coach for ELA/MATH/ELL, Guidance, School Psychologist, Curriculum Coordinator, or Related Service Provider; depending on area of concern. If it is an academic concern then it would be the Coach for the specific area. If it is a behavioral or emotional concern then it would be guidance or school psychologist. If it is a speech, sensory, fine motor or gross motor concern it would be the related service provider.
 - ✓ Observation by the person that you consulted with
 - ✓ Feedback given to you as the Referring Teacher that you can act on and take data about
 - ✓ Consultation and write up by the Coach/Guidance, School Psychologist or Related Service Provider
- Implement the accommodations and recommendations for 4-6 weeks



If the accommodations are working and the student is making progress then you stop here in the process. You have data to document your progress and you have a student who is making progress in your classroom. Great job!!

SST Referral

- You need to fill out the required cover sheet and attach all of the data that you have collected.
- Once you have the packet completed in full turn it in to the Supervising Principal for his or her review.
- Contact parent to discuss the SST process.

Definitions:

- Progress: measurable gains in the area of concern, but does not mean that the student is necessarily working on grade level. Examples of acceptable data include: DRA 2, DIBELS, interim assessment, math assessment, ELA assessment, work samples over time, anecdotal record, data collection sheet for behaviors
- Accommodation: classroom based strategies that promote student success without changing the curriculum. The strategies can be used with any student to promote learning as they are good teaching practice. Examples from Building Teaching Skills course and included list.
- Modification: changes to the curriculum that allow the student to access it, only allowed for students on an IEP, specially designed instruction.

Accommodations:

(examples to serve as a reference and not all inclusive)

- Preferential seating
- Limit distractions
- Visual cues: word wall, personal schedule, highlight direction words
- Check for prior knowledge
- Check for understanding
- Chunk information into short, meaningful parts
- Repeat directions
- Have the student paraphrase the directions back to an adult
- Fewer problems to complete
- Checklists for writing, organization, work completion
- Manipulatives for math and science
- Wait time
- Initial sound cues
- Extra time
- Use of a word processor
- Teacher proximity
- Movement during instruction
- Organizing and checking agenda
- Oral assessment
- Hands on lesson
- Use of technology
- Study guides
- Rubrics
- Graphic organizers
- Breakdown long term assignments
- Frequently conference with students about their learning
- Behavioral intervention plan
- Positive reinforcement
- Classroom rules posted
- Move and sit ~~cushion~~
- Cube chairs
- Rug mats for ~~sitting on~~

- Power Station for sensory breaks
- Pencil grips
- Weighted vests
- Sitting on a large ball
- Squish toy
- Velcro on the inside of desk
- Give directions in multiple formats
- Teach students to over learn material (practice until able to perform several error-free repetitions of the material)
- Teach students to use visual imagery and other memory strategies
- Give teacher prepared handouts prior to the class
- Teach students to be active readers through underlining, highlighting, and jotting down key words in the margins.
- Have students keep a notebook that gives an example of how to solve math problems with each step written down
- Provide retrieval practice for students prior to testing such as Jeopardy
- Review key words often
- Use gestures when speaking, increase intonation
- Illustrate tasks
- Lower the language demands and model correct language by repeating what the student says correctly
- Modify the length of a student's work
- Interactive writing: the teacher and student co-construct a piece of writing from the beginning to the end
- Pre-select and pre-teach vocabulary
- Let students complete a diagram, map, or chart instead of descriptive writing.

Next Steps

You have gone through the Staff Support Process and:

- The child is making progress with the interventions that were suggested by the team. You are all set. You should continue to implement the interventions and communicate the child's progress to the parent. The Staff Support Team Facilitator should complete the Cumulative Folder Summary Sheet and file it into the student's folder in order to document the teacher's and child's efforts.
- The child is not making progress, even with multiple attempts at supporting him or her with interventions. The Staff Support Team should make a recommendation to the Special Education Department for an evaluation to be conducted. The Team Facilitator should put the packet together with all of the documentation and turn it in to the Supervising Principal for review. The Supervising Principal should forward the entire packet to the Special Education Administrator.

FORMS

Description of Forms

1. **Teacher Prerequisite Checklist (required):** This form should be filled out on any student being referred to the Staff Support Team. There should be attachments to the form that support the need for the referral. It is a checklist so please check off each item as you have completed it so that you have been thorough in your investigation. If you do not complete the form completely, it will be returned to you so that you have another opportunity.
2. **Coach/Teacher Collaboration Form (required):** This form should be completed by the Coach for the area of concern (please Coach definition) and the referring teacher. It requires that Coach support the referring teacher by observing the student in the classroom setting and making recommendations for interventions. There should be three meetings of the Coach and referring teacher. The completed form should be included in the referral packet to the Staff Support Team.
3. **Defining Teacher Referral Concerns (optional):** This form was included in as tool for the referring teacher and Staff Support Team to use in order to better define the needs of the student being referred. The top half of the form looks at academic performance the bottom half looks at behaviors in the educational environment.
4. **Staff Support Action Plan (required):** The action will be filled out at the Staff Support Team meeting so that all members are aware of what interventions have been suggested and the timelines for completion. A copy of the action plan will be given to the referring teacher. Between the 1st and 2nd meeting there will be a period of 4-6 weeks to allow for interventions to take place and time for data to be taken on the success of the interventions.
5. **Staff Support Team Student Summary Form:** This form will be completed by the Staff Support Team Facilitator and placed in the cumulative folder of students who will not be referred for a special education evaluation. It will provide a summary of the interventions that were successful and the progress made by the student with the interventions. It is meant to provide teachers with documentation of Staff Support referrals.

Methuen Public Schools
STAFF SUPPORT TEAM
Teacher Prerequisite Checklist

Student's Name: _____ Student DOB: _____
Teacher: _____ Date of Referral: _____
Current Grade: _____

- Check the area(s) of concern regarding this student: (if more than one, prioritize by number)

____ Behavioral ____ Academic ____ Organizational
____ Social Skills ____ Language ____ Other (fine or gross motor)

- Review Student's cumulative folder for absenteeism, transience, grades, ELL, disciplinary, behavior; please list results.

- Please list any support services that the student receives. (guidance, Title 1, ESL, speech, OT, PT, 21st Century, tutoring)

- Discussed with parents the referral to SST and the following:

- Parent Perception of Problem
- Previous year teacher impressions
- History of Health (vision, hearing, etc.)
- Misc. issues

- Consult with coaches (L.A., Math, ELL, Guidance/School Psychologist, Related Service Provider) for suggestions (attach the consultation form)

- Collect and attach data in the area of need:
 - DIBELS/ DRA
 - Math Benchmark Testing/Formative Assessments
 - Writing Samples
 - Running Records/Conference Notes/Anecdotal Records
 - Variety of work samples from the area of concern with a sample of the same work from a typical peer

- Implement accommodations and document how and why they do/do not work (attach documentation)

- If the child is in grades K, 1, 2 (or whatever grades your school supports) has a referral been made to Title I?

- Teacher summary of the problem based on all of the data collected

Please attach any work samples or documentation and return to the SST Team Facilitator.

Coach/Teacher Collaboration Form

Teacher/Grade: _____

Coach: _____

1. Initial Consultation:

Date: _____

Teacher Concerns:

Initial Plan of Action: (assessments, observation, data collection)

2. Second Meeting: (discuss observation, data, and assessments conducted by Coach and refine the action plan); within two weeks of the initial meeting

Date: _____

Assessment Data:

Coach's Recommendations:

Implementation Plan: (modeling, observing, planning, provisioning)

Please complete both sides

3. Third Meeting: (approximately 4 weeks after the second meeting)

Date: _____

What worked/What didn't work? : (use data to make the decision)

Next Steps:

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coach's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please complete ~~both sides~~

Defining Teacher Referral Concerns:

Academic Performance

Homework Preparation	good	average	poor
Homework Quality	good	average	poor
Participation in class	good	average	poor
Attendance	good	average	poor
Effort	good	average	poor
Oral Expression	good	average	poor
Written Expression	good	average	poor
Organizational Skills	good	average	poor
Testing Performance	good	average	poor
Memory	good	average	poor
Follows Multi-Step Directions	good	average	poor
Handwriting	good	average	poor
Attention Span	good	average	poor
Reading Comprehension Skills	good	average	poor
Problem Solving Skills	good	average	poor
Note Taking Skills	good	average	poor
Copies from the board	good	average	poor

Behavior: (circle all that apply)

Motivated	Passive	Frequently Tardy
Dependable	Unmotivated	Disruptive
Cooperative	Seeks attention	Responsible
Restless	Uncooperative	Daydreams/Sleeps in class
Mature	Mood swings	Socially withdrawn
Hard working	Easily Distracted	Argumentative
Creative	Disrespectful	Age-Inappropriate
Respected by peers	Oppositional	Irresponsible
Respectful	Anxious	Impatient
Outgoing	Confrontational	Depressed
Self-confidant	Easily frustrated	Anti-authority
Focused	Inconsistent	Easily influenced by peers

Staff Support Team Action Plan

Student Name:

Teacher Name:

First SST Meeting Date:	Response:
Action Plan:	

Second SST Meeting Date:	Response:
Action Plan:	

Notes:

Staff Support Team Student Summary Form
Cumulative Folder

Student Name:

Date:

Grade:

Student ID #:

Referring Teacher:

Why was the student referred to the Staff support Team?

What interventions were implemented with success?

What progress did the student make?

Please see the SST Team Facilitator for information regarding the student.