

## **6171.1 Procedures**

### **Instruction**

### **Special Education**

## **SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCEDURES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Orange Public Schools is responsible for ensuring that, prior to special education referral and intervention, all reasonable efforts have been made to service students in the regular program and/or with remedial services.

Consequently, classroom support procedures are designed to assure that every effort is made to meet the needs of students within their regular educational setting. This assurance protects each student's right to be educated in the least restrictive environment.

The district provides classroom support through a School Child Study Team (CST) process. This process is the responsibility of regular education. It is the vehicle for reviewing a child's needs, planning strategies and reviewing progress as well as providing documentation of all efforts made to assist the student prior to the PPT process. This is a process designed to support regular education students and must be carefully distinguished from the Planning & Placement Team (PPT/IEP) process and the 504 process. The PPT/IEP process is specifically designed for potential and identified special education students as required by IDEA. The 504 process is a separate process from the PPT process, which provides specialized services to 504 identified students who are not classified under IDEA.

Students who are experiencing difficulty in any area which affects their classroom performance including but not limited to concerns regarding academic, social-emotional, speech-language, perceptual motor, health and self-care related areas should be referred to the School Child Study Team (CST) in their school. Special education child find procedures require that students be referred to the School Child Study Team (CST) for the following reasons: academic progress, school attendance, and behavior in school.

### **PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCESS**

The process serves as many functions:

1. Alternative strategies are developed, implemented and evaluated for any child experiencing difficulty. If all appropriate strategies have been fully implemented and proven ineffective in meeting the student's needs, then a referral to special education should be put into effect.
2. A student will not be referred to special education unless the School Child Study Team (CST) process has been completed. This process assures that strategies in the regular education classroom have been developed, implemented, and evaluated. If it is determined at the CST meeting that all strategies have been attempted and that significant progress towards meeting the student's identified needs have not been made, then a referral to special education is made.

## 6171.1 Procedures

### Instruction

### Special Education

#### SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCEDURES con't.

3. Support for the classroom teacher can be provided by the members of the School Child Study Team (CST) through suggestions for the program modifications, instructional strategies, behavioral strategies and other recommendations. This includes referral to the Reading Consultant for Early Intervention Services.
4. Students who score at or below the district's remedial cut-off score on the Connecticut Mastery Program must be referred to the School Child Study Team (CST) process in order to effectively plan and monitor their remedial program. District-wide procedures require that the district establish a remedial cut off level for reading, writing, and mathematics for grades K-6; and that students who fall at or below that cut-off score be reviewed and provided remedial services if needed. Consequently, when a CST referral is made because the student's (K-6) performance is at or below the remedial cut-off score established for Orange Public Schools, the CST must review the student's need for service and report the outcome of that review to the building principal.
5. Student's who, through the process, have been referred to special education and deemed ineligible for special education services by the PPT process may be referred back to the CST process or to a 504 Planning Team. These teams can review the information considered by the PPT and use it to develop a Remedial Service Plan (RSP) designed to meet the child's needs or develop a 504 Accommodation Plan.
6. Students who have received special education services but have exited special education and PPT jurisdiction may be referred to the CST process for support in regular education.
7. Students who are not proficient in English and require English-as-Second-Language (ESL) services must be referred to the School Child Study Team (CST) to review their need for specialized instruction. The student's progress should be reviewed at regular intervals by the CST.
8. Students whose behavior, attendance, or progress in school is of concern, should be referred to the process. Students who have been repeatedly suspended should also be referred. If the behavior, attendance, progress in school, or suspensions continue and do not appear to be responding to interventions, these students must be referred to the PPT process. State statute (10-76d-7) requires that a prompt referral must be made to the Planning and Placement Team for all children who have been repeatedly suspended or whose behavior, attendance, or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance.

In summary, the purpose of the CST process is to provide support in the form of alternative strategies to students assigned to regular education programs. It is important to remember that this is not a referral to special education. Federal and state regulations require that alternative strategies must be implemented prior to referral for special education and it is the responsibility of the CST to ensure that prior intervention strategies are appropriately applied and documented.

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the CST should consist of staff with the expertise required to design a program to meet the specific needs of the child referred. The classroom teacher, reading

## 6171.1 Procedures

### Instruction

### Special Education

#### SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCEDURES con't.

consultant, a pupil personnel specialist, building administrator or designee, school psychologist, and the parent (if possible) are often the key members.

#### DESCRIPTION OF CST PROCESS

##### *Pre-School Level*

At the pre-school level, the School Child Study Team (CST) receives referrals from the pre-school screening process, Birth-to-Three, other professionals, and parents. Referrals from all sources are directed to the CST using the Initial Referral Form. In the case of parent requests for pre-school screening, the Special Services Office will schedule a Consultation Center appointment. After consideration of the referral, consultation with the referral source, the pre-school CST may assess the child. Based on the outcome of the initial assessment, recommendations may include additional evaluation and referral to special education as appropriate.

##### *Elementary Level*

The classroom teacher initiates the CST process whenever he/she has a concern regarding a student's behavior or performance in any area including, but not limited to, academics, social/emotional, perceptual motor, speech/language, self-care, medical, health, attendance, progress in school, and behavior.

The first step in the initiation of a CST referral has two parts:

1. The teacher must notify the child's parent or guardian of the concern. This can be done through a personal conference, telephone conversation, or written communication.
2. The teacher will then complete the Request for CST Form and submit the form to the building CST chairman. (school psychologist)

A child may be referred to the process by other individuals besides the classroom teacher. Professionals within the school system, professionals outside the school system, and parents may refer a student. The classroom teacher and/or the CST chair would still initiate the CST process on behalf of the referrer.

The one time that the CST process becomes a formality is when the parent clearly states, in writing, that he/she wants the child referred directly to the PPT process. In this case, a CST is convened to make the special education referral. In this situation, the child is referred directly to the PPT process for the purpose of developing an evaluation plan and determining eligibility for special education. (This referral is initiated by the CST using the "Notification of Initial Referral to Special Education" form.)

## 6171.1 Procedures

### Instruction

### Special Education

#### SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCEDURES con't.

The teacher will provide the team with an outline of the teacher's concerns and previous steps taken to address these concerns and a record regarding intervention procedures if the child is referred to special education. For LD identification, The Reading Worksheet and/or the Math Worksheet must be filled out.

The CST meeting is scheduled by the CST chairman. The CST reviews data presented by the referring teacher and reaches a consensus on a course of action as follows:

1. Statement of concern or referral issue should be reviewed and clarified.
2. Review of student's performance including previous testing, grades, and other information available in cumulative file, including examples of student work.
3. Identification of student's strengths and needs.
4. Problem solving discussion which generates ideas for possible assistance or problem resolution.
5. Mutual agreement of specific strategies to be implemented to meet student's needs.
6. Mutual agreement regarding duration of strategy implementation, method of evaluation and evaluator(s).
7. Identify starting date, determine time frame when current plan will be in place, and set a review date. The content of the meeting should be recorded on the CST Form.
8. Develop Intervention Plan.
9. Ensure parent awareness and knowledge of process which could include inviting parents to CST meetings.

During the CST implementation period of the Intervention Plan, the classroom teacher and other evaluators are required to document the effectiveness of the strategies through anecdotal records, work samples, behavior logs, etc. At the conclusion of the Intervention Plan, a CST is scheduled to review the plan. It is the responsibility of the CST to monitor the status of all referrals under its jurisdiction. Although monitoring may take place more frequently, depending on the start and review date set at the CST meeting, all programs must be monitored and reviewed at least annually.

During the CST review meeting, the team will review and analyze the effectiveness of the interventions by comparing the student's past performance and current performance. Any testing results which became available during the implementation period along with curriculum based assessment data, anecdotal notes, work samples, CMT results, etc. should be used to determine the student's progress. The content of the meeting is recorded on the CST Form.

There are seven (7) possible outcomes of the CST review meeting:

1. Terminate the CST process because the student has made significant progress and no longer requires CST interventions.
2. Continue the CST intervention as planned because, while the student is making progress and the strategies are effective, continued intervention is warranted. A new time period for the extended Intervention Plan must be set along with another CST review meeting date.

**6171.1Procedures**

**Instruction**

**Special Education**

**SCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM PROCEDURES con't.**

3. Continue the CST process, however, due to the student's progress or performance, the team determines that the existing Intervention Plan requires modification or new strategies need to be developed. These adjustments are made, and a new duration for the Intervention Plan implementation is set as well as another CST review meeting date.
4. Discontinue current Intervention Plan and develop new plan.
5. Student referred to PPT due to the student's continuing needs. (If the student is considered potentially eligible under 504, the student must first be referred to the PPT). If the student is referred to the PPT, it is the CST Chairman's responsibility to ensure that parents receive, within five (5) school days, the following:
  - a. Parent Notification of Initial Referral to Special Education; and
  - b. A copy of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Children in Special Education.
6. Student referral to 504 Team for students declared ineligible by the PPT and who continue to exhibit a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits a life function. There will be a limited number of students who will be referred to the 504 Team because of their mental or physical impairment.

Students who are determined ineligible for services due to a lack of disabling conditions or students who have received special education services or 504 services and made significant progress to the point of not requiring continued special education may still benefit from the CST interventions.