



Minnesota New Country School Supporting Students Together (SST) Team Special Education Referral Process

Appendix A

The Supporting Students Together team (SST) consists of general educators, the school social worker, the behavior interventionist, intervention teachers, and the school nurse. The team meets at each site bi-weekly to discuss parent or teacher referrals about student mental health, academic performance, and social/emotional/behavioral problems that interfere with success in school. A parent or a faculty member may make a referral *for consideration* of a special education evaluation at any time.

Parent Referral Procedure

1. Any faculty member (e.g., classroom teacher, school social worker, intervention teacher) can receive a referral from a parent. It is very important that the request be made known to the SST as soon as possible. If any parent or guardian mentions that he or she would like to have a special education evaluation conducted for a student, the faculty member must document this request and *why* the parent says the request is being made. Within 24 hours, the faculty member must send this information to the SST Team Lead via e-mail. A parent cannot be required to put a request in writing, which is why the faculty member is required to put the request in writing per an e-mail to the SST Team Lead.

If the parent gives a faculty member a written request, make sure that the written request is dated with the date received and that the copy of the request follows the e-mail to special education coordinator. Place the dated, written request in the SST lead's mailbox.

2. The request for an evaluation by a parent will be on the agenda for the next convened SST meeting after it is received, which will usually be within 10 days of receipt of the request. Prior to the meeting, the SST Team Lead will make a follow-up phone call to the parents/guardians to clarify further and discuss concerns and to ensure that it is a special education evaluation that they want.

3. Student data will be compiled in cooperation with the classroom teacher (e.g., state assessments, district assessments, progress reports/report cards, basic health information, 504 Intervention Plans) for discussion at the SST meeting. This will ensure that complete information is available for planning next steps to best support the student in his/her educational environment and in planning a special education evaluation.

4. The SST team, in collaboration with the parents/guardians, will determine whether a special education evaluation is required or if there are general education initiatives that may be implemented to assist the student in a least restrictive environment. If the SST team and parents/guardians determine a special education evaluation is necessary, the SST Team Lead will act as liaison to the special education *Child Study Team (CST)* to present the information and to assist with planning. The CST will meet to develop a Notice of an Evaluation/Prior Written Notice and an Evaluation Plan for the parent's consent.

Teacher Referral Procedure

1. Prior to recommendation for special education referral, the referring teacher will complete the SST referral form (found on Google drive or paper copies in the mailbox area at each site) and compile student data relevant to the area of concern. This information will be submitted to the SST Team Lead one week prior to the next scheduled meeting. The information is essential to having a thorough discussion about teacher concerns and areas for intervention and support. *It is assumed that the parent is aware of teacher concerns at this point.*

2. If interventions (at least 2) have been implemented at the time of referral, the team will review the interventions for fidelity of implementation and outcomes. If interventions have yet to be implemented, the team will assist the teacher in planning interventions, create a plan for implementation of the interventions, and develop a follow-up plan.

3. Based on the intervention and follow-up plans, the SST will ultimately determine if a referral for special education evaluation should move forward. If the referral moves forward, the information is brought to the weekly special education *Child Study Team* by the School Social Worker (SST lead) so a *Notice of an Evaluation/Prior Written Notice* and an *Evaluation Plan* can be developed and sent to parents.

Any questions about this process should be directed to the SST Team Lead.