

Paterson Public Schools
Department of Early Childhood and
Special Programs

Intervention and Referral Services (I & RS)
Procedural Manual

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) Manual

This procedural manual is one in a series of five sections compiled for Paterson Public Schools (PPS) by Montclair State University's Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (MSU/CREEHS). The manual is designed to be used along with comprehensive professional development training on district procedures for pre-classification intervention and referral services (I&RS), Child Study Team (CST) roles and responsibilities, Section 504 Committee procedures, and Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) and Gifted and Talented programs and services.

The primary purpose of the manuals is to provide a user-friendly reference on specific procedures, time lines, and policies for PPS Special Programs. The manuals are designed for use by District and School Administrators, as well as members of school-based I&RS teams, Child Study Teams, 504 Committees, and ESL service providers. The sections are presented as "living documents", intended to provide background and support for ongoing professional development within the district, to assure that District and School Administrators and staff are equipped to implement PPS policies and procedures consistently and in accordance with state and federal laws. It is expected that these documents will evolve with ongoing PPS Administrator and staff input.

Note: Specific forms and documents referenced in the manual are available in the PPS district office.

Mission Statement

The **Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS) Team** is a building based team comprised of Administrative and Instructional school staff and parents/guardians committed to supporting students who are at risk in the general education populations. The **I&RS Team** assists school staff and parents by providing strategies and interventions to resolve an array of academic and behavioral problems in the general education setting. The **I&RS Team** process provides students with an opportunity to be successful in the overall school environment.

The **I&RS Team** process is not an automatic precursor to a Child Study Team evaluation. It represents a separate and distinct team effort to provide help via classroom activities. However, some students may be referred to a Child Study Team after an **I&RS Team** intervention.

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All forms are provided in English, In addition, parent-facing forms are also provided in Spanish and Arabic.

- Referral to I&RS Form (also in Spanish and Arabic)
- Health Information Request (also in Spanish)
- Initial Meeting to Plan (also in Spanish and Arabic)
- Intervention & Referral Services Monitoring Document (Data Collection Form)
(4 pages; also in Spanish and Arabic)

Part I: I&RS Purpose, Process, Teams, and Procedures

Legal Authority [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 (a)]

- “... establish and implement a coordinated system in each school building for the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services that are designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties...” [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)]; and which are designed to:
- “...assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students’ learning, behavior, or health needs.” [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)]

Purposes of I&RS Team

- Identify students in need and plan and provide appropriate intervention within regular education
- Must consist of a formal, coordinated and well-coordinated system of supportive activities and services
- Collaborative effort (**I&RS Team**, auxiliary persons/services, parent(s) and administrators)
- “Choose the appropriate multidisciplinary team approach for planning and delivering the services...” [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)]

Functions of I&RS Team

- Identifies learning, behavior and health difficulties
- Collects thorough information
- Develops and implements action plans based on collected data and desired outcomes
- Provides support, guidance and professional development to school staff
- Coordinates access and delivery of school resources
- Organizes services of community-based social and health providers
- Maintains records of all requests and action plans
- Reviews effectiveness of each intervention and action plan
- Evaluates intervention and action plan and make recommendations to principal annually

Phases of I&RS Team

- Teacher provides intervention and requests help for additional interventions
- Information is collected
- Parent(s) or guardian(s) notified and invited to contribute
- Problem solving to identify strengths and academic or behavioral needs
- Develop I&RS Plan
- Review monitored plan
- Determine future options: maintain or modify plan—or referral to CST

Intervention is a “PROCESS”

- Plans may need to be modified
- Services may be shaped over a period of time
- May need to strengthen communication with parent(s), support personnel, and administration
- Document progress ... data!
- If a referral to CST is necessary, the I&RS plan will document what has been implemented to date, as well as the effectiveness of the interventions

The Role of the General Education Teacher

Provide specific data to the **I&RS Team** about progress/concerns in the following areas:

- Social/emotional issues and discipline
- Organization/study skills and attention
- Academics
- Health or daily living activities
- Language

I&RS Team Participants

Required:

- Principal/I&RS Chair
- Guidance counselor (should serve as meeting note taker)
- Learning Disabilities Consultant (LDT-C)
- Referring classroom teacher
- A school staff member who has expertise to address the identified problem. That staff member must have expertise in curriculum and differentiated instruction as well as other areas such as reading, mathematics, academic and/or behavioral issues and social-emotional learning. This participant can be a Special Education Teacher, a LDT-C, a reading, mathematics, or behavioral specialist, or an on-site Supervisor of Special Education for Literacy, Mathematics, BIL/ESL, and Special Education

Optional:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- Nurse
- Speech and Language Specialist
- Psychologists
- Social Worker
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Any current or former teacher(s)
- Individual possessing expert knowledge in curriculum and instruction
- Special Education Teacher
- On-site Supervisor of Special Education for Literacy, Mathematics, BIL/ESL, and Special Education

I&RS Procedures

1. General education teacher implements classroom interventions and informs parent(s)/guardian(s) of academic/behavioral concerns
2. After classroom interventions are no longer effective, teacher communicates concerns to Principal/I&RS Chair
3. Teacher completes and submits **I&RS Referral Form #1** and student work samples to Principal/I&RS Chair
4. Principal/I&RS Chair will check forms, record the teacher's request and schedule a date for I&RS meeting with appropriate team members (**Team Coordinator chosen by rotating selection method. Team members to be determined by specific issues of referral**). The referring teacher will invite the parent(s) or guardian(s) by telephone.

5. **I&RS Team Meeting:**

- a. Identify the student's strengths and issue(s)/problem(s)
- b. Identify the student's educational needs
- c. Select objectives that are measurable, specific and descriptive
- d. Develop a plan of intervention(s) for the classroom teacher
- e. Provide **Intervention Plan Form** to classroom teacher
- f. Schedule follow-up meetings for 30 and 90 calendar days
- g. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) does/do not attend the meeting, a copy of the I&RS plan will be mailed to him or her/them

6. Implementation of plan

7. I&RS Team gathers for a follow-up meeting 30 school days after the initial I&RS plan is developed to review the **Data Collection Form** with classroom teacher(s) and address any teacher concerns.
8. I&RS Team gathers for a follow-up meeting 90 school days after the initial I&RS plan is developed to review the monitored plan and determine if interventions have resulted in progress toward specific I&RS goals for the student. Possible outcomes of analysis of monitoring:
 - a. Maintain current interventions
 - b. Modify the plan to add interventions
 - c. Add new interventions
 - d. Refer to the Child Study Team

Part II: Suggested Interventions and Strategies

Suggested Academic Strategies—Reading Modifications

Instructional Preparation:

- Build background information
- Develop vocabulary
- Show a videotape of a novel before reading it. Compare similarities and differences.

Reading Modifications:

- Teacher reads the text aloud using a guided reading procedure
- Tape-record the entire lesson to be read (Some publishers offer tapes of their books)
- Focus on the pictures to encourage students to rely on visual clues
- Collect high-interest low vocabulary books
- Tape-record stories you read aloud to the class. Allow students to check out book and tape.
- Have students tape their favorite books for others' listening
- Provide a "Picture Frame" so a student will see only several lines of print at a time
- Use repeated reading—teacher to student, student to teacher, etc.
- Encourage fluency by timing students reading independently. Graph progress.
- Provide choral reading opportunities to build confidence
- Place colored acetate sheets over text to enhance the contrast and darken the print

Written Language Modifications:

- Provide lecture notes by xeroxing copy of a classmate's notes
- Give separate grades for mechanics and content of written work
- Use worksheets which require little writing
- Allow students to answer test questions orally at least some of the time
- Administer shorter quizzes and tests rather than longer tests and essays
- Pair student with able peer to proofread writing
- Provide daily writing opportunities
- Carefully structure assignments. An outline or format to follow may help a child to get started.
- Minimize rote copying tasks
- Provide word banks
- Have student begin writing by mapping his ideas
- Guide student to write with an audience in mind
- Allow student to compose on computer or word processor
- Concentrate on handwriting as a separate activity

Spelling:

- Teach cover and write method for study
- Trace words on arm to access tactile sense
- Adjust number of words on the list. Increase when student masters three consecutive tests.
- Allow student to set individual selling goal
- Group words into "families" that follow a pattern
- Choose words relevant to the curriculum
- Highlight prefixes, suffixes and base words to aid visual discrimination
- Give student an audiotape of word list to take home for practice testing
- Provide a minimum 10 minutes of daily practice
- Record pretest and post test scores. Grade on effort and improvement as well as percentage.

Suggested Academic Strategies—Math Modifications

- Allow students to use number lines, calculators, and fact tables
- Encourage the use of fingers if it improves accuracy when student is calculating
- Use timed drill materials to encourage student to participate
- Use real-life experiences to develop basic concepts
- Check work immediately before assigning more
- Demonstrate problems with colored chalk or pens to add value
- Model the math problem using manipulatives if possible
- Frequently review and reinforce previously taught material i.e., daily quizzes
- Provide personal charts with key words found in work problems
- Have students create word problems for classmates to solve
- Teach students "the math fact families". Unifix cubes work well for this.
- Offer numerous opportunities for manipulating real objects prior to paper and pencil calculations
- Complete math assignments on graph paper to keep columns aligned
- Have students draw pictures or diagrams of word problems

Suggested Academic Strategies—Other Modifications

Modifications for Textbooks

- Keep several copies of highlighted texts
- Use a yellow highlighter for important facts, green for key vocabulary, and pink for definitions
- Provide taped versions of textbooks (if available)
- Allow student to take home an audiotape of materials before the materials are read in class
- Preview the bold-faced words with students. Practice reading the words.
- Provide a weekly vocabulary list to students in advance for home use
- Allow student to check out textbooks for home use
- Develop study guides

Modifications for Teacher-Made Materials

- Reduce visual clutter on worksheets. Reduce number of problems on a page.
- Create generous answer lines
- Eliminate unnecessary reading
- Provide a word bank when appropriate

Modifications for Daily Assignments

- Divide an assignment in half i.e., ask students to complete even or odd problems. Stress and reinforce accuracy.
- Work in cooperative groups or with partners so the student is able to have questions read aloud to him or her
- Rewrite the material at an appropriate reading level or provide a parallel activity for the same skill
- Occasionally allow a student to respond orally
- Provide extra drill and practice sessions for skill mastery when possible
- Allow a student to illustrate his or her answer instead of responding in a written format
- Provide some self-correcting materials for immediate feedback
- Allow student to just give answer rather than copy an entire sentence or problem
- Begin with one-page worksheets with specific information to be completed rather than open-ended assignments for students who are easily overwhelmed

Modifications for Directions

Oral

- Try to keep them concise and simple
- Establish eye contact as much as possible
- Accompany verbal explanations with a visual demonstration whenever possible
- When directions are complex, allow students to complete first several steps before giving more directions
- Use a combination of visual and auditory directions, such as the blackboard, overhead, flip chart or pictures
- Illustrate or provide photos of the steps of multiple step activities

Written

- Use simple sentence structure with concise vocabulary
- Offer pictorial cues and concrete examples to supplement oral directions
- Use a highlighter to focus student's attention
- If there are multiple steps, number them

Assessments

- Read tests if needed
- Allow students to test orally when needed
- Test frequently i.e., use daily quizzes to monitor progress
- Use fact recognition rather than factual recall on tests
- Allow students to test individually when possible

Teacher-Made Tests

- Underline or box the directions
- Give examples of correct responses
- Use large, bold print whenever possible
- Provide ample space for answers
- Exclude the statements “All of the Above” or “None of the Above” from multiple choice tests
- Organize columns with equal number of items in short segments for matching tests
- Avoid double negatives and eliminate the words “All” or “Never” from true or false tests
- Provide a word bank for fill-in-the-blank questions
- Offer a blank outline format to help the student organize his or her ideas for essay tests

Alternative Assessments

- Keep portfolios of the best student work samples
- Provide regular times for student reflection on goals and progress made
- Allow students to demonstrate knowledge by creating a project or demonstration

Classroom Organization

- Post a daily schedule and try to follow it as closely as possible
- Designate one location to hand in daily assignments
- Create class routines for daily activities
- Use a peer to help monitor assignments
- Allow a peer to write down assignments in a notebook
- Schedule desk clean-out once a week
- Use color-coded folders to store work in progress by subject
- Provide a “To Do” box on one side of the desk and a “Work Completed” box on the other for paperwork

Behavioral/Motivational Support

- Have students record their progress on appropriate activities for added motivation
- Keep searching for the appropriate motivating reward (snacks, computer time, art activity, etc.)
- Change rewards as soon as they lost their effect
- Let parents know about the reward system—they may want to provide reinforcement at home
- Create a behavior modification system (a point system to chart students’ progress)
- Rewards are most effective when applied immediately

Communication with Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

- Increase communication and aid parents in helping a child through daily home reports
- Have both parents and teacher to write, comments, concerns and suggestions for a student through daily logs
- Let parents know when a student has shown improvement during the day i.e., via a brief phone call
- Encourage parents to set up short-term and long-term rewards for good reports from school
- Have parents sign off on communications sent home to ensure they are getting the messages

Suggested Strategies to Address Personal and Social Behaviors

General Strategies

- Provide opportunities for recognition
- Offer positive reinforcement for appropriate actions/choices
- Establish a behavior contract with specific objectives/outcomes
- Ignore inappropriate behavior that does not warrant immediate attention
- Conference with family about student's immediate attention and/or behavior (negative and positive)
- Provide positive feedback to indicate success, importance and respect

Provide Counseling to Address

- Support/Self-esteem/Awareness
- Social Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Decision Making Skills
- Anger Management
- Self-Management
- Other

What to do when student:

Fights with other students

- Be mobile to be frequently near the student
- Keep student in in your line of vision at all time
- Provide the student with preferential seating
- Speak with the student about positive/negative actions and the consequences
- Reduce emphasis on competition
- Try various groupings to assist the student socially
- Communicate with the family about the student's progress and/or concerns

Is easily angered, annoyed, or upset

- Provide the student with positive feedback
- Provide opportunities for the student to ask for assistance
- Reduce emphasis on competition
- Provide positive reinforcement for appropriate responses to anger, etc.
- Provide the student with preferential seating away from peers who incite him or her
- Provide a quiet place for the student to work
- Try various groupings to determine the situation in which the student is most successful
- Do not force the student to interact with peers if he or she likely to become angered, annoyed, or upset
- Provide the student with a selection of activities to perform if he or she becomes angered, annoyed, or upset
- Maintain consistency in expectations
- Remove the student from an activity until he or she can demonstrate self-control

Has little or no interaction with peers

- Assign a peer helper
- Give the student the responsibility of tutoring a peer
- Provide the student with opportunities to interact positively with peers
- Create situations in which the student must work with a peer
- Try various groupings to determine in which situation the student is most comfortable
- Have a student run errands with peers to facilitate interaction
- Encourage the student to interact with others and vice versa
- Provide preferential seating next to the peers with whom the student most frequently interacts
- Communicate with the student's family to share information about his or her progress
- Have the student act as group leader in an activity

Bothers other students

- Provide preferential seating
- Interact frequently with the student in order to maintain his or her involvement in the activity at hand
- Remove the student from the activity until he or she can demonstrate self-control
- Teach the student appropriate methods for communicating his or her needs to others
- Seat the student away from the students he or she is most likely to bother
- Identify a peer to act as a role model
- Provide the student with a full schedule of activities
- Keep student in in your line of vision at all time
- Encourage the student to ask the teacher for assistance
- Establish classroom rules and provide the student with a copy
- Provide positive reinforcement to student for appropriate choices or actions

Makes unnecessary comments or noises

- Remove the student from the activity until he or she can demonstrate self-control
- Communicate with the student's family to share information about his or her progress
- Keep student in in your line of vision at all time. Make eye contact with the student.
- Reinforce the student for raising his or her hand in order to be recognized
- Call on the student when he or she is most likely to be able to respond correctly
- Give the student classroom responsibilities
- Interact frequently with the student to reduce his or her unnecessary noises
- Have the student work in small groups to provide him or her with frequent opportunities to speak
- Consider the student's feelings when dealing with his or her behaviors
- Make the student aware of the number of times he or she makes inappropriate comments/noises

Does not stay in assigned areas for specified time

- Provide the student with positive reinforcement and/or feedback when in compliance
- Provide the student with preferential seating so that the student's needs are close to his or her desk
- Have the student question any directions or instructions he or she does not understand
- Establish class rules and be consistent when enforcing them
- Provide positive reinforcement to students who comply with remaining in the assigned area
- Ensure that the student has what he or she needs to complete assignments or requirements
- Make sure that the student is told where he or she needs to be at all times
- Require time spent away from an assigned area to be made up at recess, lunch, etc.
- Communicate with the family about the expectations of the student and his or her progress and/or concerns
- Remind the student before each activity where he or she should be and for how long

Ignores the consequences of his/her behavior

- Establish class rules and reiterate them often
- Provide the student with a list of clearly identified expected behaviors and consequences
- Provide positive reinforcement to students who engage in appropriate behavior
- Provide the student with social and academic successes
- Be consistent in the consequences for inappropriate behavior
- Communicate with the family about the expectations and the student's compliance or non-compliance
- Have the student write about the inappropriate choice he or she made and its consequence
- Remove the student from the group until he or she can demonstrate appropriate behavior and self-control
- Acknowledge consequences or situations as they occur
- Avoid placing the student in competitive situations
- Provide the student with forced choices
- Allow the student to voice his or her opinion in an appropriate manner
- Be careful to avoid embarrassing the student

Needs immediate reward/reinforcement to demonstrate appropriate behavior

- Have the student maintain a chart of his or her appropriate behavior
- Provide the student with positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior
- Greet and acknowledge the student as often as possible rather than providing recognition only as a reinforcement
- Do not criticize
- Communicate with family about the student's progress and/or concerns
- Explain to the student why his or her behavior is inappropriate and recommend ways to change it

Behaves impulsively

- Keep student in in your line of vision at all time
- Be mobile to be frequently near the student
- Provide preferential seating to limit the student's mobility
- Assign additional responsibilities to the student (i.e., chores, errands, etc.)
- Provide the student with clear, simple directions or instructions
- Provide the student with a routine to be followed in the classroom and other areas of the building
- Establish classroom rules and consequences
- Be consistent when enforcing rules
- Have the student practice counting to ten silently before beginning an activity
- Deliver a predetermined signal (i.e., hand signal, verbal cue) when the student begins to demonstrate impulsive behavior
- Provide the student with positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior or self-control
- Communicate with the family about the student's progress or concerns
- Provide the student with written/verbal clues such as "Stop, Think, Go" when he or she begins to act impulsively

Does not accept changes in an established routine

- Have the student work near a peer in order to follow changes in an established routine
- Provide the student with a revised routine
- Have the student rely on a predetermined signal (i.e., lights off, hand signal, etc) of impending change
- Provide positive reinforcement to the student for accepting changes
- Explain the change in the routine to the student personally
- Inform the student in advance—if possible—when a substitute teacher will be in the classroom

Cannot work independently

- Establish and enforce classroom rules
- Identify a peer to act as a role model
- Provide preferential seating to limit distractions
- Provide positive reinforcement to the student for completing assignments independently
- Ensure that the student understands the directions, instructions, and/or assignments
- Have the student complete unfinished work at home
- Assign the student parts of tasks at a time rather than the entire task
- Work on a few problems with the student to serve as a model

Appendix: I&RS forms

All forms are provided in English. In addition, parent-facing forms are also provided in Spanish and Arabic.

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