Steps for 4J Special Education Referral Review Process

Agency Referral

When a Building Team (Data Team, IIPM Team, PBIS Team, SST, etc.) agrees to refer a student for an evaluation, the **Team Leader** (or designee) contacts the parent to share the team's concerns and inform parent that referral information will be sent to the District team for review.

Do not contact the parent without having gathered all the necessary data for the Referral Packet!

> Possible script: "We have concerns about (student) and would like to ask our District's Referral Review Team to look at his/her progress and give us a recommendation about pursuing a special education evaluation. We will put together Referral Packet to send to the District Team, and I will contact you when we hear back from them. Then we can meet to discuss their recommendations. You will be getting information in the mail that describes the special education process. Is there any specific information you would like us to include?"

Parent Referral

When a **Parent** informs school personnel (preferably in writing) that they would like to refer their child for a special education evaluation, the **Building Team Leader** (or designee) explains the referral process to the parent.

> Possible script: "I understand you are requesting a special education evaluation for your child. We will put together a Referral Pack to send to the District Referral Review Team. I will contact you again when we hear back from them, and we can set up a meeting to look at their recommendations and decide about starting an evaluation. You will be getting information in the mail that describes the special education process. Is there any specific information you would like us to include?"

After parental contact

1. **Team Leader** notifies the building Psych/Consultant that a referral has been started (preferably by email).

2. **Psych/Consultant** completes PWN of Referral (designates self as temporary Case Manager in Synergy SE) and sends the PWN and Procedural Safeguards to parent. (This can be a CMA request).

3. **Team Leader** give completed referral packet (including any information provided by parent), to the building **Psych/Consultant**; who submits the Referral to the District Review Team.

4. **District Referral Review Team** examines the Referral and provides a recommendation and explanation about whether or not to initiate an evaluation.

5. Packet is then returned to the building **Psych/Consultant**, who will initiate an Evaluation Planning meeting.

> a. If the Review Team determines that the data _supports_ the suspicion of an educational disability, they will recommend that the Evaluation Planning team seek Consent and start an evaluation.

> b. If the Review team determines that the data _does not support_ the suspicion of an educational disability, they will recommend that the Evaluation Planning team _not start_ an evaluation. The Evaluation Planning team (including parent) should discuss this and decide how to proceed.

>> i. If Evaluation planning team decides to proceed with an evaluation, despite the Review Team's recommendation, Consent for evaluation should be sought and evaluation started.
>> *or*
>> ii. If Evaluation Planning team decides *not* to proceed with evaluation, the **Psych/Consultant** will complete PWN of Evaluation Decision not to evaluate, send a copy to Parent**,** and place original in the student's cumulative file. The Referral Packet should also reside in the student's cumulative file.

Pre-referral tips:

For academic concerns:
- Tier 1: Student receives grade-level instruction in regular classroom.
    - Use a measurement tool to determine if student is at-risk (e.g., *easyCBM* benchmark).
- Tier 2: Student receives additional support in regular classroom.
    - Provide instructional-level groups *and* measure student progress.
    - After six weeks (three data points) of little or no growth, consider Tier 3.
- Tier 3: Student receives **targeted**, **evidence-based** interventions outside regular classroom.
    - Provide pull-out instruction to focus on specific skills AND measure student progress.
    - Tier 3 should be *intensive*, appropriately *targeted* and *research- or evidence-based.*
    - Each intervention should be focused on *teaching* the student a skill; progress on *that skill* is what needs to be measured and tracked.
    - District recommends AT LEAST 12 weeks of intervention at Tier 3, but many students need more than that to show progress.
    - Consider changing the *intensity*, *target skill*, or *amount* of intervention if progress is not seen.
- If student continues to make little or no progress, consider referring for evaluation.

For behavioral concerns:
- Tier 1: Student experiences schoolwide prevention activities.
    - Includes the schoolwide practices that teach and practice behavior expectations; strong classroom management by the teacher; or, other positive school climate activities.
    - If students need more support, add Tier 2.
- Tier 2: Student receives additional behavior supports.
    - Might include regular contact or support from an adult, like the counselor or psychologist; Check-In/Check-Out is common here.
    - Provide support *and* measure student progress.
    - If progress data shows little or no growth, add Tier 3.
- Tier 3: Student receives **targeted**, **evidence-based** behavior supports (BSP).
    - Generally includes a Behavior Support Plan (often based on a Functional Behavior Assessment), which usually involves actions for *prevention, targeted teaching, targeted intervention, and specific response*.
    - The plan must be *implemented* and *progress data collected* as written in the BSP.
    - District recommends AT LEAST 12 weeks of intervention at Tier 3, but many students need more than that to show progress.
- If student continues to make little or no progress, consider referring for evaluation.

NOTE: If the student's progress is closing the gap between current skills and grade-level skills (e.g., moving closer to the 25th percentile), then the intervention is *working* – keep it up!

NOTE: Students do not have to "start over" with each new school year; progress from the previous school year is useful data when combined with data from the first several weeks of the new school year.