Developing Guidance

John Sander
Steve Gill
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Welcome and Introductions

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Why?

• Direct relationship to key questions people want answered
• Accessible: short and to the point
• Help to start important discussions: Build capacity and understanding
• Get people onto the same highway, pointed in the same direction
• Pro-active to help students
• Pro-active to reduce legal exposure
• Can be provided in a variety of formats for different user “tastes”
Rules and Exceptions

• A general rule can be ...... Social/Emotional is an SDI and not a Related Service

• An exception can be ..... Social/Emotional as a Related Service to Math, and why...

• This is important to increase the depth of the discussions that occur on teams and within the district, to better understand where professional development is needed, and to plan professional development
Foundation

• The guidance documents provide the foundation to go deeper into the work and to increase professional practice

• Example: A guidance document can state what goes into each of the following within IEPOnline: Assessment Summary, Observations and Conclusions, Significant Findings

• Deeper Level: What is needed in the Observations and Conclusions to defend your decisions? How do you document your decision? When and How are decisions made during the process?
Guidance Documents vs Procedural Manual

- Increased Usage
- Ability to respond and adapt
Design

• Short ones ---- 1 word to 2-3 sentences, to cover facts. (e.g., number of days for the referral process)

• Medium ones ---- a couple of paragraphs to cover an issue (e.g., explaining why staff cannot sign an IEP they didn’t attend)

• Long ones ---- to cover concepts; usually no longer than 3-4 pages (e.g., difference between SDI for social versus emotional versus behavior versus adaptive). These are also meant to spur discussion.
Content and Examples

• Short:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Can a referral be refused?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Content and Examples

• Medium: September Evaluations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>I have an evaluation due in September. What should I do?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer:</td>
<td>The evaluations that are due in the month of September (or between the end of the school year and beginning of the subsequent school year) will be completed by the end of the current school year. That is, no school should receive an overdue or due in September evaluation regarding a student who was in our School District the prior school year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Content and Examples

• Long

• Discuss how to determine SDI for social versus emotional versus behavior versus adaptive
You try one . . .

• Where do you document a one-to-one paraprofessional in the IEP?
• What are you basing your opinion upon?
• What pitfall do you need to protect against during this guidance?
Developing Guidance in Your District

• Determine your internal experts and key players
• Gather a small group of these staff members
• Brainstorm a list of 50-70 issues (short, medium, long)
• Assign the work
• Review with Director/Executive Director
• Discuss formats for sharing
  • (intranet, paper, word document, files on desktop)
• Share (completed Guidance Documents or Drafts)
Sustaining the Work

1. Releasing two of these per week, and talking about what ideas/questions these bring up
2. Editing existing documents
3. Creating new documents based upon the questions that arise
4. Working with staff regarding how they will access these (intranet, word document, paper...)
5. Working with district staff and building staff to hold each other accountable
Sustaining the Work

1. Sending out edited documents and discussing transparently how the change came about
2. Thanking staff for asking questions and making suggestions
3. Encouraging more ideas
Returning to the WHY

The impact of getting staff on the same highway, pointed the same direction

1. The reduction in organizational time and energy taken up answering and solving the questions and issues.
2. Speak / Lead with 1 voice: The reduction in “answer shopping/hunting”
3. The ability to fix misunderstandings rapidly
4. Build relationships through coordinated work
Questions
Contact Information

• John and Steve are available to work with your team
• As consultants we are available to:
  • Share a resource of 70+ FAQs
  • Review process and plan with Executive Director / Director
  • Discuss formats for sharing
  • Problem solve implementation issues
  • Help customize district approach

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