

Guidelines for Identifying the Need for Temporary Student Support in Preschool and Elementary Autism Classrooms

PURPOSE

These guidelines have been developed to assist in determining the need for temporary short-term 1:1 student support in preschool and elementary autism classrooms. The team reviewing the referral includes the principal, teacher, and the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) coach. Parents and the ABA Specialist may also participate. The team should consider any disruptive behaviors evidenced by the student, the instructional support needs of the student, and the rate of progress within the curriculum. Additional support would be warranted when a student's behavior significantly impacts the instructional environment or when the student is experiencing significant difficulty in accessing the instructional program and those needs cannot be adequately met with the existing staff.

It is anticipated that assignment of short-term 1:1 support could result in:

- a decrease in the behaviors of concern;
- greater on-task behavior; and/or
- increased ability to participate in instructional activities.

The team should consider the potential for the unintended negative impact of 1:1 assistance. This could include:

- creation of an unnatural and more restrictive environment;
- student's isolation from classmates, limiting peer interactions;
- student's dependence on adults; and/or
- reduced opportunities to develop self-regulating behaviors.

PROCEDURES

1. The Temporary Instructional Support Referral form should be completed by person (persons) requesting consideration of additional support.
2. Upon receipt of the referral form, the teacher and the ABA coach will gather data, review the student record book and the IEP, and complete the Temporary Instructional Support Information Sheet.
3. If the concern is a disruptive behavior, the ABA coach will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan which will be attached to the Temporary Instructional Support Information Sheet. If a behavioral intervention plan has already been developed, the plan will be reviewed and modified as appropriate.
4. After a review of the data, records, functional behavior assessment, and behavior intervention plan, the ABA coach will recommend the next steps to be considered on the Temporary Instructional Support Information Sheet. This information will be shared with the family and other members of the team as appropriate and will be reviewed in 30 days.
5. If consideration of additional support is recommended, the referral and substantiating data will be reviewed by a school team. The team would include the principal, the teacher, the ABA coach and others as appropriate. If there is

- consensus that the student requires 1:1 assistance to benefit from the educational program, the school team will:
- a. develop appropriate goals to address the areas of concern;
 - b. determine the times during which this assistance is required; and
 - c. complete the Temporary Instructional Support Plan.
6. There will be a review of the current instructional student to staff ratio in the autism classroom(s) and the availability of staff already assigned to the building who could provide this support. If there is sufficient school staff available, the principal will facilitate the provision of this instructional support.
7. If there is not sufficient school staff to provide this level of support then:
- a. The principal or ABA coach will forward a copy of the Temporary Instructional Support Referral Form and Information Sheet, and the Temporary Instructional Support Plan to the ABA specialist to request additional assistance in the classroom.
 - b. The ABA specialist will assign an ABA Instructional Assistant (IA) to the classroom. The assignment of additional assistance will be made for 30 days.
8. When additional staff is assigned to a classroom for instructional support, the team will reconvene to review the Temporary Instructional Support Plan and progress on the identified goals no later than the 25th day of services to determine whether continued support is required.