

Chappell Elementary School

Learning Strategies Policy

Definitions

1. *Individualized Education Plan (IEP)* – a formal written plan developed for each student with an identified learning need.
2. *Inclusive Classrooms* – classrooms that include students with a variety of learning needs.
3. *Accommodations* – changes to instruction or assessment that allow an individual student to learn the curriculum and demonstrate that knowledge.
4. *Differentiated instruction* – instruction in an inclusive that is tailored to the individual needs of a learner.

Principles

1. **Our mission:** *Each day we challenge and inspire students to love learning and to shape a better world.* The purpose of the Learning Strategies Program is to ensure that students with identified learning needs are supported so that they can live our Chappell mission statement.
2. Chappell Elementary is committed to providing the IB Primary Years Program to every student regardless of her learning needs. Our classrooms are inclusive and welcome diversity of learning styles. This Learning Strategies Policy is designed to ensure that the special education needs of individual learners are met within this context.
3. Students with special education needs are identified and accommodated so that they have equal access to the curriculum. The Special Education teacher will work with the classroom teachers to ensure that differentiated instruction is provided in the classroom for special needs students. We understand that differentiated instruction is good practice and do not confine differentiation exclusively to identified students.
4. We believe that every student is the responsibility of every teacher. This means that our teachers take ownership of the students with special learning needs in their classrooms and differentiate their instruction to meet those needs.
5. During monthly collaboration meetings all staff meet to identify needs and strategies for all students. Teachers are invited to share successful strategies they have developed. In this way, professional development is on-going and teachers share their expertise.

Chappell Elementary is committed to making our classrooms safe, inclusive environments where every student has an opportunity to learn and grow so that they can realize their potential to shape a better world.

Practices

Practices common to all programs – Kindergarten to Grade 12

GREEN BAY AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
Green Bay, Wisconsin
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND STUDENT RELATIONS

COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING EXPECTATIONS, FRAMEWORK, AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide district expectations to schools on the implementation of collaborative problem solving in the Green Bay Area Public School District. The purpose is to facilitate the process of problem solving to meet student learning needs at any level within the school district. Each school will be required to establish a Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) and a consultation team under this problem solving umbrella.

1. The **Teacher Assistance Team** is a group of teachers who meet collaboratively to address the functioning needs (academic, cognitive and behavioral) of students. This is the first step of developing and implementing interventions and/or adaptations.
2. The **Consultation Team** includes classroom teacher(s), student services team, and a building administrator who meet collaboratively to further explore unresolved student concerns. Building administrators are responsible for the implementation of assistance teams and consultation teams in the Green Bay Area Public School District. The rationale for implementing these teams is listed below:
3. Student performance is closely monitored which may lead to improved student outcomes.
4. Educational accountability is improved.
5. Collaboration among school personnel is encouraged/improved.
6. Teacher morale and teamwork are improved.
7. Communication and coordination of student activities are improved.
8. Opportunity for professional development is evidenced.
9. Appropriate referrals for evaluation are increased.
10. Prereferral activities are recognized as an integral part of teachers' responsibilities.

Parent involvement is an integral part of the problem solving process. Staff should involve parents as appropriate during the assistance team process. Their involvement and input is necessary and required by law during the problem solving part of the process.

Effective communication and coordination between the assistance team and consultation team are also very important. It is recommended that effective communication linkages be established between assistance and consultation teams. As an example, the facilitator for the assistance team may serve on the consultation team.

Training should be provided to all building staff on the assistance and consultation team process, collaborative teaming, the problem solving process and a review of confidentiality. Also, the team should be provided with additional training when needed and should be informed of the resources that are available for implementation of a student's plan.

RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS OF COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

A.Team Composition and Structure

1. At all levels, the team should be comprised of core members. (Multi-ethnic and second language representation should be considered when establishing committee makeup).
2. The team should meet on a consistent basis to address the specific student needs at each school.
3. Assistance and consultation teams should meet at different times during the week.
4. The time allotted for each student at team meetings is contingent upon the unique needs of the student.
5. The responsibility for chairing the meeting may rotate among all core members with the exception of the teacher.

At no time should the chairperson record the official notes.

6. The role of the recorder may also rotate among core members with the exception of the teacher.

B.Team Collaboration/Problem Solving

1. Team Interaction:

- a. A climate should be established to understand and value each contributor's background and expertise.
- b. Every individual should be valued as an equal member of the team with no one person having greater authority within the group.
- c. The team facilitator(s) may rotate.

The facilitator should chair the committee, provide procedural guidance, coordinate group dynamics and provide information to keep the group on task.

- d. A set of ground rules should be established for the exchange of information:

- 1) Each team member should be given opportunities to ask a question, provide input, or voice his/her concerns regarding the functioning of the team.
- 2) Team members should stay on task and refrain from side chatter.
- 3) Team members should have respect for a timeline.
- 4) Confidentiality should be enforced.
- 5) The team should have a meeting space that is conducive to privacy in order to support confidentiality.

- e. The team should clarify and resolve conflicts among team members.

- 1) The team should review the ground rules.

- 2) The team should reassess the ability to implement strategies to improve team collaboration skills.
- 3) The team should utilize consensus building techniques.
- 4) The team should observe/consult with another building team if needed.
- 5) The team should explore community resources knowledgeable in team collaboration if needed.

2. Team Self Evaluation:

a. Periodically, the team should utilize 4-5 minutes to review its efficiency (debriefing) using a checklist of questions. Examples of questions include:

- 1) Did each person have an opportunity for input today?
- 2) Did the team stay on task?
- 3) Does the team have a clear plan for each student discussed?
- 4) Are there any areas of conflict or concern for the team? Information from this review should be used to adjust the format/agenda of the next meeting.

C. Team Process

Steps to the Process:

1. The person requesting assistance should fill out the appropriate form.
2. The administrator/designee should receive the request and prioritize the request with others.
3. The team should establish membership for the team for each student on a case-by-case basis and develop procedures to notify others when the student will be discussed at a team meeting.
4. An agenda should be developed for the meeting.
5. The meeting should take place.
6. An action plan, including adaptations and resources, should be developed with decision recording and identifying the individuals responsible for follow up.
7. Teachers who work with the student should be informed that the action plan has been developed and should receive a copy.
8. Steps within each individual student action plan are carried out and reviewed by the team to measure outcomes.
9. Each school should establish and maintain a recording system where records are kept in a confidential location and staff are made aware of its location. One copy should go in the team binder and another in the student confidential/cumulative folder.

D. Meeting Framework

1. Clarify/establish meeting expectancies.
2. Gather/review background information.

3. Determine contributing factors - teacher, student, home, community, and classroom variables.
4. Discuss student strengths, identification and prioritization of critical needs.
5. Brainstorm interventions/modifications/actions
 - a) Determine previous strategies used.
 - b) Establish additional strategies.
6. Achieve consensus on action plan by determining who, when, where, and how strategies will be implemented.
7. Debrief on the meeting (periodic basis).