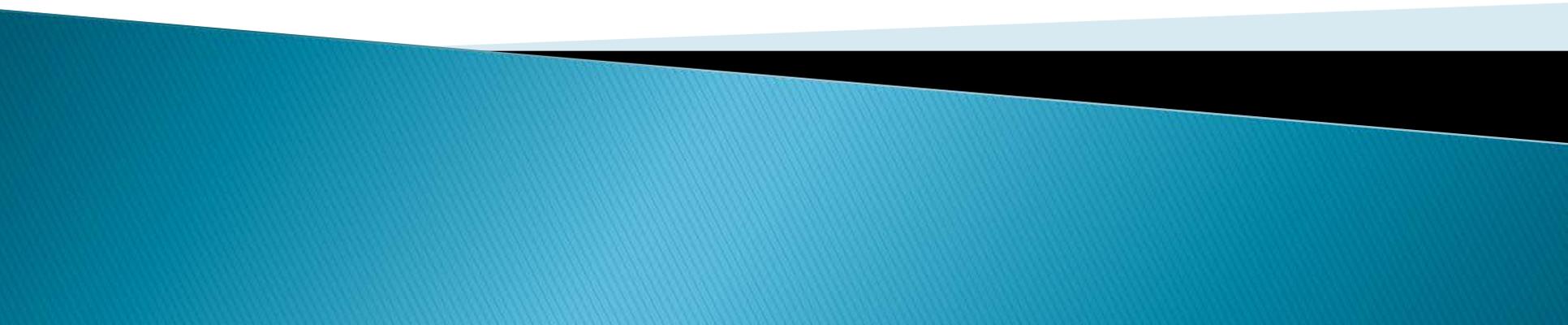# State Mandated Special Education Training

Key Elements and Scenarios to Consider

The Referral Process

- The school must document regular education interventions prior to a referral
  - Parents who initially have concerns about their child should meet with the Principal and school-based staff to discuss their concerns and develop interventions for the classroom when possible
- Parent requests for evaluation must be in writing
- The district is required to follow through on referrals for students who live in Dartmouth but attend a private school

The Referral Process: Turn and Talk

- A parent approaches his child's principal in the school yard and tells the principal that his child may have a learning disability because she is struggling with mathematical word problems. How might the principal proceed with this parent?

Evaluations

- Initial Evaluations must be made in all areas of the suspected disability
- Re-evaluations are conducted at least every three years, but not more than once per year
- Evaluations are required in order to determine that a student is not eligible, except for graduation with a regular diploma or aging out (at 22)
- State regulations include required and optional assessments for initials and re-evals
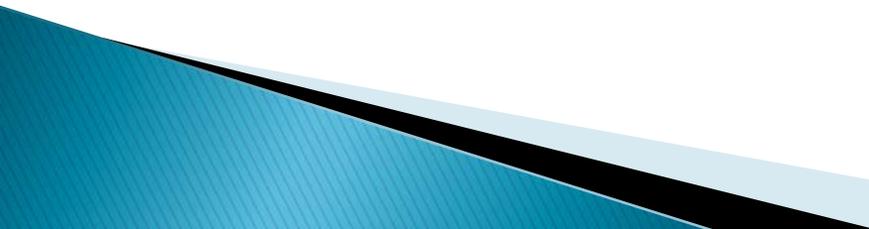
Evaluations: Turn and Talk

▸ A fourth grader has been referred for an initial evaluation. He is decoding at a second grade level and comprehending at a third grade level. His writing skills are at a second grade level. His math skills are on grade level for computation and problem solving.

  ◦ What would the required assessments be for this student?

  ◦ What additional questions would the Team ask to determine which optional assessments would be needed?

The Team Process

- Review of Team members
  - the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)
  - at least one regular education teacher familiar with the student;
  - at least one special education teacher familiar with the student;
  - a representative of the district who has the authority to commit resources;
  - an individual who can interpret evaluation results;
  - other individual(s) who have knowledge or expertise regarding the student;
  - if appropriate, the child.
- Function of the Team:
  - Eligibility Determination
  - Development of an IEP (when applicable)
  - Placement Decisions
- Parents are critical members of the Team, and Team members should check in with parents throughout the meeting
- Teams should keep a whole child perspective

The Team Process: Turn and Talk

- A six year old child has been found eligible for special education services due to a Developmental Delay, which impacts her readiness skills and fine motor skills.
  - What might the Team recommend as specially designed instruction for this child?
    - Modifications that affect content?
    - Delivery of instruction?
    - Methodology?
    - Performance Criteria?
    - Related services?

Development of the IEP

- Team should plan to use the students' strengths in developing an education plan
- Measurable annual goals should show a step-by-step increase in a student's learning outcomes
- The general curriculum must be addressed in all student's IEPs; all students must have access to show progress in the general curriculum
- The Review Team meeting should have a printed Agenda to facilitate effective communication and help the Team reach consensus
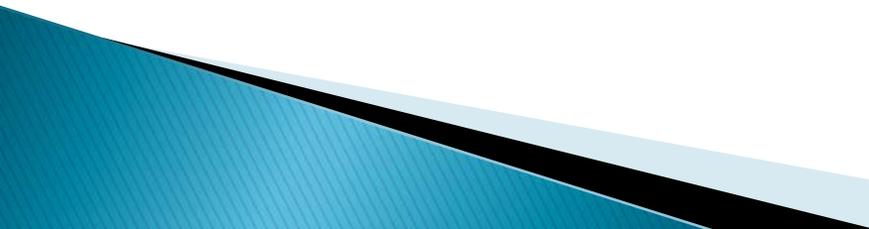
Development of the IEP: Turn and Talk

- What steps does your school take to ensure that you are keeping a whole child perspective when developing an IEP?

Transition Planning

- Beginning at age 15, IDEA 2004 requires a student's IEP to include a statement of the transition service needs of the child
- The Team determines transition activities. IDEA 2004 requires that the District invite the student (regardless of age) if one of the purposes of the meeting is to discuss transition services
- As a student approaches graduation, the Team must consider the need for a 688 referral

Transition Planning: Turn and Talk

- A student, age seventeen, has been invited to his annual IEP meeting, where transition services are being discussed. The student has shown some academic progress over the year and is currently on a seventh grade level. At the meeting the student seems disinterested about the future. What types of questions could the Team ask to gain a better picture of how to develop the best transition plan to meet his needs?

Monitoring Progress

- Effective Progress: Has the student..
  - Made documented growth, with or without accommodations, in knowledge and skills acquisition (including social/emotional) with regard to state and district curriculum?
  - Made growth according to chronological age, developmental expectations, and his or her individual educational potential?
- Progress Reports must be sent to a student's parents or guardians at least as often as parents are informed of non-disabled children's progress
- Parent/Advocate Visitation Guidelines (p. 25 of manual)

Monitoring Progress: Turn and Talk

▸ You are the chairperson at a Team meeting. At the meeting, the parents indicate that they feel that their daughter is not making effective progress in reading, as she is on a third grade level in the fifth grade. This student started the school year at a first grade reading level. How would you respond to the parent?

Discipline

- If necessary, Functional Behavioral assessments should be incorporated into the process of IEP development for students with significant bahvioral difficulties
- If a student with an IEP has been suspended for more than 10 days throughout a school year, a Manifestation Determination is required
- A school may remove a student to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days if:
  ◦ The student carries a weapon
  ◦ The student possesses or sells illegal drugs/controlled substance
  ◦ The students inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person on the school premises or at a school function

Discipline:
Turn and Talk

- Brainstorm a list of three incidents at each level (elementary, middle, high) that would meet the criteria of danger, in the sense that there is a likeliness to result in injury to the student or others.