

**School District of Springfield  
Township  
Administrative Rule--236**

**Student Assistance Program**

The School District recognizes that the well-being of the individual student and the student body are essential to providing for academic success, physical and mental health, and the achievement of future potential and, therefore, supports the formation of student assistance teams in the schools to assist at-risk students.

Each school year a team shall be formed in each secondary school which includes: a teacher, an administrator, the school nurse, a counselor, and the Director of Special Education and Student Support Services or designee. These individuals will be trained to identify at-risk students and to explore available School District options for these students, including assessment, intervention, guidance, and counseling, as well as identifying community-based resources for further assessment and treatment.

The Student Assistance Program shall:

1. provide staff to function as student intervention teams;
2. develop and implement an identification and referral process to assist students who exhibit at-risk behaviors, based upon observed behaviors;
3. provide information to all students about the availability of the student assistance teams and related services;
4. assist at-risk students and their parents/guardians in dealing with at-risk behaviors through school and/or community resources; and,
5. provide assistance and support for students who return to school after participating in a rehabilitation program.

Procedures

A. Referral Process

1. A student can be referred to the student assistance team based upon observed behaviors which may indicate problems for the student in the following areas: substance abuse and/or use, suicidal

behaviors or depression, physical and/or sexual abuse/neglect, truancy, school refusal, eating disorders, and other behaviors that could place the student at-risk in the learning process.

2. Referrals to the student assistance team may be made by any member of the school staff, other students, parents or guardians or by the student him/herself. Referrals may be made on the forms provided by the school district. Individuals making the referral must provide descriptive data supporting the concern. Such information shall be submitted confidentially to an administrator, a guidance counselor, a school nurse or a member of the Student Assistance Program team.

#### B. Information Collection

1. Upon receiving the referral, the student assistance team will gather data and information about the referred student. Information and data may be obtained from the following sources: building administrators, school nurse, guidance counselor, faculty members, school psychologist(s), or any other appropriate source.
2. The student assistance team will review the data and information and decide whether or not sufficient data exist to pursue the referral further.
3. All summary records collected in this process are subject to review and inspection by parents/guardians in accordance with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment (20 USC 1232G), applicable state regulations, and Student Records Policy 216.

#### C. Student /Parental Contact

1. When the student assistance team determines that there is sufficient observable behavioral evidence to proceed beyond information collection, the student assistance team will formulate a remedial course of action which may include, but will not be limited to actions (a) through (e) as follows:
  - a. in school interventions;
  - b. a referral to in-school resources, such as guidance counselors, nurses, a school psychologist or a multi-disciplinary evaluation team;
  - c. building administrator intervention;

- d. an on-going school monitoring process to be designed and implemented as appropriate;
  - e. referral to appropriate community resources for evaluation or an appropriate community resource chosen by the parents/guardian.
2. When an intervention is conducted, the parents/guardians shall be contacted by the Student Assistance Program team to attend a meeting to review the student information collected and to discuss the team's recommendations. The student assistance team will encourage the student and parents/guardians to complete the evaluation and comply with the recommendations made by the community resource evaluator(s).
3. If a clear and present danger to a student exists, and if the parent/guardian of the student cannot be reached, the student assistance team will immediately contact the principal or designee, who will then approve an appropriate community resource or health provider. In all such cases, the superintendent's office shall be promptly notified.
4. If a student presents a clear and present danger to another person, the principal or designee will notify the police and the endangered person(s). In all such cases, the superintendent's office shall be promptly notified.
5. If a student is known to be or considered to be abused or neglected, proper authorities will be notified, as required by law.

### Consent, Disclosure and Confidentiality

The student assistance team may involve staff members at every appropriate level. The confidentiality between students and the student assistance team shall be respected, and no confidential information will be given to persons in the school district except on a need-to-know basis, as governed and required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations for operation of student assistance programs.

No confidential information shall be released to persons and agencies outside the school district without the consent of the parent or guardian and without consultation with a school district psychologist, except where authorized or required by law.

All student records, data, and recorded contacts with a student and his/her parent/guardians will be handled in a professional and confidential manner. All student assistance team information will be secured in locked files.

## Exceptions to Normal Procedures

Exceptions to these provisions for consent, disclosure, and confidentiality include situations wherein:

1. the life of a student is in clear and present danger and the parents/guardians cannot be reached. In such a case, the principal, in concert with the counselor and/or the school district psychologist, will take appropriate action without following normal procedures. Subsequently, the student assistance team and the student's parents/guardians will be informed of the emergency steps that were taken;
2. a student presents a clear and present danger to the life of another person.

In all such cases the superintendent's office shall be promptly notified.

A summary of this Policy and Administrative Rule shall be included in the Student Handbook and shall be shared with students and parents on a yearly basis.

Adopted: April 3, 2000