



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

May 11, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Grimsby Lincoln Room – Education Centre

STUDENT VOICE

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1. Quorum / Welcome / Introductions Linda Morrice
 2. Approval of the Agenda of May 11, 2017 Linda Morrice
 3. Approval of the Minutes of April 13, 2017 Linda Morrice
 4. Business Arising from the Minutes of April 13, 2017 Linda Morrice
 5. Early Intervention and Assessment Courtney Moody
 6. Review of Special Education Report (Sections 1-5, pages 1-20)..... John Dickson
 7. Association and Board Information (**please bring written submission**)
 8. Correspondence
 9. Questions and Answers
 10. Adjournment

NEXT MEETING: June 8, 2017 – Grimsby Lincoln Room, 6:00 p.m.

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

DSBN SEAC - May 2017
Courtney Moody, Psycho-Educational Consultant

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

- Specify and verify the student's needs
- Support accurate decisions about the student's program
- Support a range of other decisions, such as those relating to referrals, screening, classification, instructional planning, and determining next steps
- Help determine particular interventions that may be necessary to enable the student to demonstrate achievement

Taken from Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, Ministry of Education (2010)

"THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT.. IS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING"

Assessment informs programming



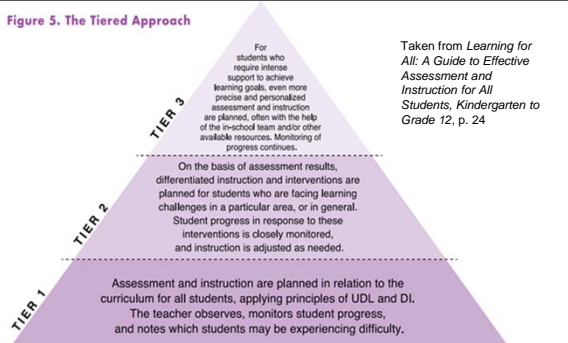
TIERED APPROACH

It is based on frequent monitoring of student progress and the use of assessment data, focusing on learning rate and level, to identify students who are facing challenges in learning and to plan specific assessment and instructional interventions of increasing intensity to address their needs effectively.

Learning for All K-12, Ministry of Education 2013



Figure 5. The Tiered Approach



Taken from *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, p. 24

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN...

- Assessments and instruction, including early intervention strategies *, have been tailored **over a period of time** to a student's strengths & needs; and
- The student's progress has been closely monitored and assessed; and
- The student persistently demonstrates key characteristics of potential learning difficulties

** The nature, intensity and duration of intervention are always determined on the basis of evidence gathered through frequent and systematic monitoring of students progress*

WHY DO WE REFER STUDENTS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS?

- Student is struggling academically
- Many strategies/interventions have been tried
 - With fidelity and over a period of time
- School staff have run out of strategies to implement - do not know how to program for the student
- Previous assessment recommendations are not working for the child

The purpose of assessment is to assist with programming. Identification and placement are secondary gains that may come from doing an assessment; however, there can be secondary losses (e.g., weak LD kids becoming dependent on accommodations that they will not get in post-secondary)

WHAT IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT?

- Consists of a series of tests to evaluate a student's level and pattern of cognitive and academic functioning. It usually provides a detailed breakdown of cognitive processes
- Sometimes also evaluates social/emotional/behavioural functioning and/or adaptive functioning
- Completed by, or under the supervision of a psychologist
- Can result in a specific diagnosis [or lead to an identification]

Adapted from Education for All (2005) p. 21

WHO CONDUCTS PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS?

- An assessment is considered "psychological" if it is signed off by a registered psychologist/psychological associate
 - In Ontario, need to be a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario
- Assessments used for IPRC decisions must be psychological
- There is no "list" of "accepted" psychologists from whom we can accept reports
 - Can always use reports for programming purposes

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

• INFORMAL MEASURES

- Personal Health Information Form
- Review of OSR
- Interviews with teachers, school staff, parents, and/or other involved professionals
- Observations of the student
- Analysis of informal interactions with students

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

• FORMAL MEASURES

- Cognitive/Intellectual tests
- Academic/achievement tests
- Processing tests
 - E.g., memory, visual-motor integration, visual processing, executive functioning
- Rating scales/questionnaires completed by teachers, parents and/or students
 - Social, emotional, behavioural functioning
 - Adaptive functioning
 - Executive functioning

DIAGNOSIS VERSUS IDENTIFICATION

Diagnosis

- Controlled act performed only by certain professions under the Regulated Health Professions Act (e.g., physicians, psychologists)
- Provides a professional opinion concerning the **CAUSE** of an individual's symptoms by linking it to a disorder

Identification

- Comes via an IPRC which is governed by the Education Act
- Based on Ministry of Education categories of exceptionalities
- Carried out for the purpose of planning how best to meet the pupil's **NEEDS** in an educational environment

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN REFERRING FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

- The Basics - Occam's Razor
- Parent Input
- Age of the Student
- Current Life Situation/Home Environment
- Cultural/Linguistic Factors

IN CONCLUSION...

- Psychological assessments are just one tool in our toolbox to support students' learning; however, it should one of the last tools we go to in supporting students - other *Tiers of Intervention* should be exhausted first
- We want the assessment to be viable over a number of years rather than a snapshot in time - therefore, we need to put thought into when is the right time for the student to have an assessment



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