Group/Team Consultation: Types of Special Service Teams

School consultation offered in a team format has become a common school psychologist activity. There are two types of teams on which most school psychologists are members:

- Multi-Disciplinary Teams (e.g., IEP teams).
  - The passage of PL 94-142 (and its subsequent reauthorizations) institutionalized the practice of team consultation for the school psychologist.
- Pre-referral Teams (e.g., SSTs, Problem Solving Teams).
  - More recently, fueled by what was thought to be the over identification of students with disabilities, many states have required team consultation as a pre-condition for special education referrals.

Group Consultation and Collaboration: A Psych Service Element

NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services

- Consultation and Collaboration:
  - School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.
Group Consultation and Collaboration: A Psych Service Element

- NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services
  - Consultation and Collaboration:
    - School psychologists use a consultative problem solving process as a vehicle for planning, implementing, and evaluating academic and mental health services.
    - School psychologists effectively communicate information for diverse audiences, such as parents, teachers and other school personnel, policy makers, community leaders, and others.

NASP, 2010

Group Consultation and Collaboration: A Psych Service Element

- NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services
  - Consultation and Collaboration:
    - School psychologists consult and collaborate at the individual, family, group, and systems levels. School psychologists facilitate communication and collaboration among diverse school personnel, families, community professionals, and others.
    - School psychologists function as change agents, using their skills in communication, collaboration, and consultation to promote necessary change at the individual student, classroom, building, and district, state, and federal levels.

NASP, 2010

Group Consultation and Collaboration: A Psych Service Element

- NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services
  - Consultation and Collaboration:
    - School psychologists apply psychological and educational principles necessary to enhance collaboration and achieve effectiveness in provision of services.

NASP, 2010
Characteristics of Effective Special Service Teams

- **Clear Goals**
  - All members understand and agree with the team’s purpose.
- **Accountability**
  - Team member responsibilities are clearly defined.
- **Group Process**
  - The collaborative decision making process is understood and followed.
- **Data Based Decision Making**
  - Data is used to identify learning challenges and to evaluate intervention effectiveness.
- **Empirically Supported Interventions**
  - Research supports the prescribed use of selected interventions.

Supporting/Creating Effective Special Service Teams

- **Administrative Guidance and Support**
  - Leadership, participation, investment.
- **Training**
  - Ensuring that all team members understand the functions, membership, format and roles.
- **Institutionalization**
  - Making the team a part of the school structure.
    - Such is mandated by state and federal law for when it comes to special education multi-disciplinary teams.
Pre-requisite Skills for Team Consultation

- Consultation skills and abilities
- Collaborative skills and abilities
- Problem solving skills and abilities
- Expert knowledge

Pre-referral Teams: Functions

- Designed to help a consultee (typically a teacher) modify instruction or classroom management to overcome a student's learning challenges.
- May or may not be convened to address the needs of a student who is thought to need a special education evaluation.
- However, before a special education referral the failure of general education interventions must be documented.
  - Thus, pre-referral teams (e.g., Student Success Teams, Student Study Teams) must document that all possible general education resources have been attempted.
Pre-referral Teams: Membership

- Teams membership is not specified in education code, but typically includes general education teachers, administrators, and specialists (e.g., school psychologists, special education teachers, etc.).

Pre-referral Teams: School Psychologist Roles

- Facilitate collaboration and the group problems solving process.
- Share (give away) his or her knowledge of the principles of educational psychology.

Pre-referral Teams: Meeting Format

- Employs a basic problem solving model.
- Burns et al. (2008) provide one example of such a model.
  1. Initial consultations
  2. Problem solving team conference
  3. Follow-up consultation
  4. Follow-up conference
Burns et al. (2008, Figure 1, p. 1639) provide one example of a data collection form.

Another example, which my experience has found to be most common in CA, is offered on the following slide.

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**Pre-referral Teams: Meeting Format**

- Strengths
- Concerns
- Prior Interventions
- Potential

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**Questions** | **Actions** | by whom | by whom | Results
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**Pre-referral Teams: Meeting Format**

- Case Study: Jeff
  - Age 8.
  - Grade 3.
  - Primary English speaker.
  - Reading at a first grade level.
- Consider the following “SST” data and in small groups brainstorm strategies to address the students learning challenges.
Multidisciplinary Teams: Functions

Individual Education Program (IEP) teams are convened whenever a student is referred as possibly needing special education assistance. Specific team functions include to develop, review, and/or revise IEPs. This involves the following:

1. Data gathering and assessment relative to the students learning challenges
   - For example, the school psychologist will conduct a psycho-educational assessment.

2. Eligibility determination
   - Does the student require special education assistance? In other words, from the available data and assessments, can it be argued that student needs cannot be met in the general education program?

3. Development of goals and objective
   - If the student is eligible for special education assistance, what are the objectives of such assistance (i.e., relative to where the student is now, where to you want the student to be after a given period of time)?

4. Special education placement determinations.
   - From the identified goals and objectives, what form of special education best meet the students needs (i.e., addresses goals and objectives)? This placement needs to be in the “least restrictive environment.”
Conduct a psycho-educational assessment.
Form assessment data, provide recommendations to the IEP team regarding educational needs and special education eligibility.
School psychologists have a bigger role in some eligibility determinations than in others.
Regardless of the classification being considered, eligibility determinations are the result of team deliberations.
No one person makes an eligibility determination.
Pre-referral Teams: Are Required When...

- In California, all special education referrals must include:
  - Documentation of the resources of the regular education program that have been considered, modified, and when appropriate the results of intervention.

(5 CCR 3021(b)(2) – Referrals for Special Education and Related Services)
IEP Team Meetings Required
An individualized education program team shall meet whenever any of the following occurs:

(a) A pupil has received an initial formal assessment. The team may meet when a pupil receives any subsequent formal assessment.

(b) The pupil demonstrates a lack of anticipated progress.

(c) The parent or teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise the individualized education program.

(d) At least annually, to review the pupil's progress, the individualized education program, including whether the annual goals for the pupil are being achieved, and the appropriateness of placement, and to make any necessary revisions. The individualized education program team conducting the annual review shall consist of those persons specified in subdivision (b) of Section 56341. Other individuals may participate in the annual review if they possess expertise or knowledge essential for the review.

Multidisciplinary Teams:
Membership

- Unlike SSTs, teams membership is specified in education code.
  - One or both of the pupil's parents, a representative selected by a parent.
    - At least one regular education teacher of the pupil.
    - At least one special education teacher of the pupil.
    - An administrator.
Multidisciplinary Teams:
Membership (continued)

- Team membership is specified in education code
  - An individual who conducted an assessment of the pupil or who is knowledgeable about the assessment procedures used to assess the pupil, and is familiar with the assessment results or recommendations.
    - For a pupil suspected of having a specific learning disability, at least one member of the individualized education program team shall be qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of children, such as a school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, or remedial reading teacher.

[Diagram]

- Whenever appropriate, the individual with exceptional needs.

California Special Education Eligibility Classifications

- Hearing impairment
- Concomitant hearing and visual impairments
- Language or speech disorder
- Visual impairment
- Severe orthopedic impairment
- Chronic or acute health problems
- Autistic-like behaviors
- Significantly below average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes

The decision as to whether or not the assessment results demonstrate that the degree of the pupil's impairment requires special education shall be made by the individualized education program team.

The individualized education program team shall take into account all the relevant material which is available on the pupil.

No single score or product of scores shall be used as the sole criterion for the decision of the individualized education program team as to the pupil's eligibility for special education.
More Information About IEPs and IEP Teams

- Understanding the IEP Process
- 2004 IDEA Regulations

More Information About IEPs and IEP Teams

- California Department of Education Laws & Regulations
  - http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lr/
- California Department of Education Sp. Ed. Resources
  - http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/selinks.asp
- Training on Writing IEPs Based on State Standards
  - http://www.calstat.org/iep/
    - Self-paced web training module assisting learner in understanding IDEA and components of a performance objective. It provides information on how to write IEP goals tied to standards, are student focused and measurable.

Questions?

Next Week (9/24/13)
School Organization, Culture, and Systems-Level Consultation
Read:
- McGlinchey & Goodman (2010)
- Curtis et al. (2010)

Paper 1 due