Administrative Procedure 177

EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDERS IN SCHOOLS

Background

Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division recognizes that the school, parents/guardians, and community health professionals share a common goal to pursue, within their defined roles, the best interest of the child. Hence, the school division has established guidelines and procedures to clarify the relationship between the school and public and private third party service providers when one or both of the following apply.

- Parents/guardians have retained and/or compensated such community professionals to support their child.
- Staff from another agency and/or ministry request to observe and/or work with a student at school.

Principles:

1. Schools have a) the right to determine, and b) the obligation to provide education programs and services in schools as stated in *The Education Act, 1995*.
2. Schools are responsible for ensuring a) student safety, liability, confidentiality, and supervision; and b) availability of adequate space for school-based programs and services.
3. The school is the primary provider of school-based programs and services.
4. Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division provides a continuum of services. A description of special education programs and services is outlined on the Student Support Services webpage - SRPSD Student Support Services
5. School division staff work in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure that the needs of the child are identified, considered, and met. To that end, collaboration with community agencies and private therapists is valued.
6. Parents may decide to secure additional support for their child through community agency staff or private therapists, consultants, educators, or interventionists. When parents opt for additional support for their child, it is the parents' responsibility to arrange for these services to be offered in the home, community, or practitioner office setting.

Definitions:
Direct services are services delivered by SRPSDs staff including teachers, educational associates, Student Support Services personnel, and/or individuals contracted by SRPSD.

Third party services are services delivered by individuals from an external organization. There are two types of third party services including public and private.

- *Public third party services* are those delivered by staff from an agency or other public organization where needed and requested by SRPSD. This could also include not for profit charitable organizations. An agreement, memorandum of understanding, or contract will detail the services provided and conditions related to the provision of those services.
- *Private third party services* are those retained and/or compensated by parents or guardians. They have not been requested by SRPSD.

Procedures

1. Private third-party services delivered directly to students during the instructional day are not normally permitted in the school setting.

2. Private third-party professionals may, at the discretion of the school division, be permitted in schools solely for observation where a) it assists the privately retained professional or community agency staff to set appropriate goals for the child in non-school environments, and b) to ensure consistency of programming outside of the school environment.

3. The following conditions must be met before a private third-party professional is permitted in a school.
   - 3.1 The parent informs the school that they have arranged private third-party professional support for their child and request an in-school observation by the professional/agency.
   - 3.2 A request by a private third party professional or community agency staff to observe a student in a classroom must be made to the principal (Appendix A).
   - 3.3 The school principal will determine if the requested observation can be carried out in such a manner that:
     - 3.3.1 Will not negatively impact the educational environment.
     - 3.3.2 Will not interfere unduly with the privacy rights of other students and staff.
   - 3.4 If approved, the principal will sign to approve the request.
   - 3.5 A parent-signed SRPSD *Release of Confidential Information* form is required.
   - 3.6 The principal will determine and schedule the number and duration of third-party requests in an effort to minimize the disruption to the delivery of the instructional program.
   - 3.7 Whenever a parent/guardian requests that school staff share information about their child with a private therapist or agency, the parent/guardian must complete a SRPSD *Release of Confidential Information* form. Students over 15 years of age of sufficient maturity must also sign the consent.

Reference: Section 85, *The Education Act,1995*

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