

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM - Series 600**

### **604 Services**

#### **604.3 Student Assistance Program**

##### **I. Mission Statement**

The West Branch Community School District recognizes that students can experience a number of family, emotional, psychological, medical, legal, alcohol/drug abuse or other personal problems which can have an adverse effect on their behavior, health or academic performance in school. The school becomes concerned when these problems, which may occur in a student or in a family member, repeatedly and definitely interfere with a student's school performance or jeopardize the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity or rights of other students or personnel. The potential for immediate and lasting personal damage exists unless the school acts in conjunction with the parents to help their children understand the complex nature of the problem and to offer alternatives for assistance.

In an effort to identify students with behavioral, health or academic problems including alcohol/drug abuse and to assist as soon as possible, the West Branch Community School District establishes a Student Assistance Program. Members of the Student Assistance Team may include certified teachers, administrators and AEA support personnel.

##### **II. Objectives**

1. Establish a well-trained network of school personnel to identify and provide assistance for students experiencing problems having an adverse effect on their behavior, health or academic performance in school.
2. Develop and recommend to the Board of Education policies that recognize and support the objectives of the Student Assistance Team.
3. Enlist the support and involvement of all staff members.
4. Inform students of the program and enlist their support.
5. Encourage students to seek assistance.
6. Provide information to students and parents about resources available for assistance.
7. Conduct all proceedings in a non judgmental and confidential manner.

8. Encourage development of a healthy lifestyle.
1. Promote positive school/community relations and understanding by communicating the goals and-objectives of the Assistance Committee.
2. Establish follow-up procedures and plans for on-going student support.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Assistance Team through measurable and/or observable methods.

### III. Guidelines

1. The responsibility to maintain satisfactory or acceptable levels of academic performance and/or general conduct remains with the student at all times, whether in school, at school-sponsored events or on school grounds. The primary responsibility for helping students who have personal problems lies with the parents. However, because of the potential for lasting damage and the complex nature of home and school-related problems, the school needs to act in conjunction with parents to offer assistance.
2. Students may be referred to the SA Team by any staff member or employee who is aware of a student who: (1) exhibits a pattern of definite and repeated unacceptable or unsatisfactory performance, (2) who repeatedly violates a school rule, or violates a state or federal statute or (3) who manifests any signs, symptoms or indications of the presence of family, emotional psychological, medical, legal or drug/alcohol related personal problems that repeatedly and definitely interfere with the student's or others welfare.
3. The Student Assistance Team will recommend referral to appropriate resources as deemed necessary. The school will not assume liability for any cost that might occur.
1. At all times, it is the prerogative of the student to accept referral to the SA Team or professional assistance or to reject it. If a student accepts or rejects assistance, it still remains his/her responsibility to bring performance and conduct up to satisfactory or acceptable levels.
2. If a student accepts referral and treatment, that fact will be regarded as it would for any illness, with respect to benefits or privileges.
3. No records of a student's involvement with the SA Program are to be kept in his/her permanent file or cumulative file. The fact of a student's participation in the SA Program will remain absolutely confidential. Conversations and meetings will be subject to the ethics governing confidentiality.
7. Any school-based program that specializes, in whole or in part, in providing treatment, counseling and/or assessment and referral services for students with alcohol or drug abuse problems must comply with the federal confidentiality regulations. Student Assistance Teams meet this requirement. Once a student has an appointment scheduled with the Student Assistance Team and if the referral relates to alcohol and/or drug abuse, information about a student is protected by the federal confidentiality regulations. The restrictions on disclosure apply to any information, whether or not recorded, that would identify the student as an alcohol or drug abuser, either directly or by implication. These

restrictions mean:

- a. The fact that a student seeks or receives treatment cannot be disclosed without the student's consent, even to the parents.
- b. If a student decides to participate in the SA Program, the student's consent is adequate and parental/guardian permission or notification is not legally mandated or required by these guidelines.
- c. If a student's parents/guardians are in attendance at a SA Team meeting, any information that would identify the student as an alcohol or drug abuser, either directly or by implication, cannot be disclosed without the student's permission.
- d. A student's written consent is required to release any information related to alcohol or drug abuse/dependency or to enter a treatment program.

A member of the SA Team cannot make an appointment with a referral agency for the student without the written consent of the student.

Refer to Iowa Code 125.33.

1. An essential feature of the Student Assistance Program is that students who think they have family, emotional, psychological, medical, legal, alcohol/drug abuse or other personal problems may contact the SA Team voluntarily, with the same assurance of confidentiality.
  2. The awareness and support of parents/guardian for a student with a family, emotional, psychological, medical, legal, alcohol/drug abuse or other personal problem is extremely important. However, should either student or parent/guardians not wish to cooperate in improving school performance or conduct, or in making assistance available, the student's status in school will be reevaluated, taking into consideration what is in the best interest of the student, the nature of the problem and the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity and rights of other students or personnel.
1. It is against school policy for anyone to be in school, on school grounds or at school sponsored activities while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Federal and state laws also prohibit the possession, use, sale or delivery of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances on school grounds. School policy outlines consequences for students who are observed by certified staff or law enforcement officials using or possessing alcohol and/or illegal drugs at any time or place or, who admit facts or actions which would constitute a criminal offense. Violation of these rules and laws will result in the approved intervention process and/or in serious disciplinary action.
  2. Prescription medications are construed as exceptions to this policy when used by the individual for whom they are prescribed and in the manner prescribed.
  3. It is the responsibility of the high school and middle school administrators and/or other

designee to use procedures consistent with this policy and with standard administrative practices and Board Policy regarding student behavior and discipline. West Branch Board Policy — Series 500.

4. No actions of the Student Assistance Program will violate the students rights as defined in the "Statement of Guiding Principles for Students," West Branch Board Policy — Series 500.
5. The main responsibility for operating the program will be in the hands of the building principal (or his/her designee) who will interpret the district's policy to students, staff, parents and the community. He/she will provide the necessary orientation and training for staff and will establish the SA team. The SA team will assess the nature and scope of the problem in students referred and make recommendations. The building principal/designee will periodically evaluate the progress of the program and its effectiveness and will make reports and recommendations to the superintendent.

Adoption Date: September 19, 1988

Review Date: June 8, 2009

Revision Date: June 8, 2009

Cross Reference: 502.4 Tobacco-Alcohol-Drugs