



NJDOE News

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DOE to Distribute Information/Video Packets to Show Schools How They Can Help Students with Learning, Behavior or Health Problems

A four-part videotape series and companion guide will be mailed to all chief school administrators and county superintendents this summer to show how troubled students can be helped at an early stage.

"We have seen what can happen when school children with emotional or behavioral problems do not get the help at the first signs of trouble," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "The results can be catastrophic, for themselves and others. Fortunately, New Jersey has a program in place to identify and assist children in need of support.

"Our intervention and referral services program can help defuse situations before they end in violence. But it is also designed to assist students with academic and health problems so they can get the most out of their education."

Regulations adopted by the State Board of Education in July 1994 require all local boards of education to provide intervention and referral services in every school for pupils who are experiencing difficulties in class but have not been determined to be in need of special education programs and services. The program, known as Intervention and Referral Services for General Education Pupils, provides a mechanism for teachers, parents, neighbors and other students to help children exhibiting learning, behavior or health-related problems.

Hespe said the videotapes and accompanying companion guide will show districts, step-by-step, how to form an intervention and referral services team and how to maximize its potential by working with parents, businesses and community support groups. The materials explore different ways to solve learning, behavior and health problems and highlight best practices and innovative intervention strategies.

In the future, Hespe said the Department of Education will distribute a resource manual that will provide a comprehensive review of issues related to intervention and referral services and further recommendations on how to plan, develop, implement and institutionalize building-based teams.

A number of technical assistance options also will be offered in the future to support new and existing intervention and referral services teams. Each technical assistance program will be specifically designed to address different organizational needs and levels of readiness.

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