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# A Parent's Guide

Instructional Decision Making  
and the student



# What Is the Instructional Decision Making Process (IDM)?...

The instructional decision making model is a process for a team of parents, general and/or special education teachers and Grant Wood AEA staff \* to:

- assist teachers and parents as they help students who are having difficulty learning and
- individualize instruction to meet a student's academic or behavioral needs.

The goal of the IDM process is to identify the direct instruction and data collection needed in the area of concern by examining:

- teaching techniques
- classroom setting
- material being taught
- learning and behavioral needs of the student.



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## What is an example of an instructional need?

Two examples of an instructional need are:

- improve the student's reading comprehension skills
- teach the student how to accept comments from adults to help improve his/her classroom behavior.

## Who is on the Instructional Decision Making Team?

In addition to your child's teacher, your school counselor and/or principal may be attending team meetings, as appropriate.

\*Staff from Grant Wood Area Education Agency may help with your child's instruction. This may include a speech-language pathologist, school social worker, consultant, school psychologist, or others. As a parent you are welcome to invite another person (who is knowledgeable about your child) to attend a meeting.



## Getting Started...

### When and where does Instructional Decision Making begin?

In each of the settings mentioned below, the teacher or service provider will keep a record of how well each student meets his or her goal and then decide if more help is needed. The contact person from the school will call the parent to set up a meeting where the team can talk about what might be done to help the student. The parent, the student, if appropriate, and the educators discuss what instructional interventions may be made in the classroom to address the concern.

Instructional decision making occurs in a variety of settings:

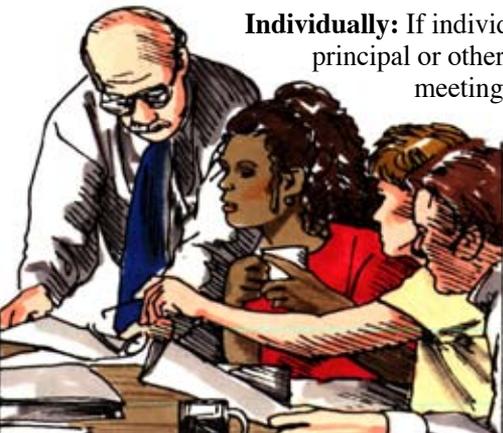
**Classroom(s):** Your child's teacher uses information from all of the students' periodic assessments to ensure that each student is learning.

The available data may indicate that one or more students need additional instruction in order to make desired progress.

**Small Groups and/or Individually:** The teacher or other staff provide more learning opportunities in a small group or individually to the students who are not learning at the same rate as their peers. They may also provide a variety of materials or additional teaching techniques.

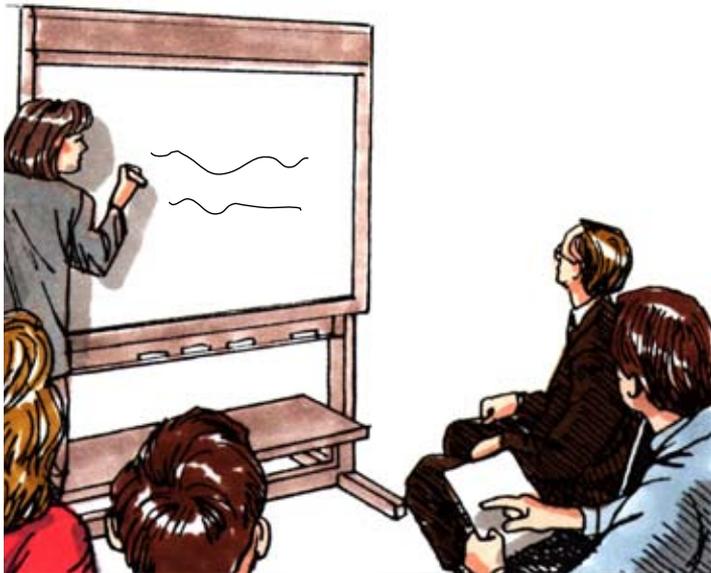
**Individually:** If individual help is needed, the school principal or other support staff will help to arrange a meeting to discuss ways to help the student succeed.

*Note: Occasionally a student has needs that require intensive instruction. The team will move to consideration for special education services immediately if the information indicates this need.*



## What Occurs at the Instructional Decision Making Meeting?...

- **The Team meets to:**
  - define clearly the area of concern,
  - determine the expectations of the parent and the teacher and
  - decide what additional information is needed.
- The teacher will share what efforts have already been made and explain how these have helped or did not help.
- The team will design specific interventions and match the resources to the student's need.
- The team will determine ways to measure the results of the interventions. An intervention may be provided for 2 – 9 weeks before the team meets again to review the results.



## Next Steps...

### Will this process take more than one meeting?

During the first meeting in the instructional decision making process, a parent may be asked to schedule follow-up meetings to review the information that is collected and make future plans. The purpose of the meeting(s) is to determine if:

- The interventions have been successful and the student has met the desired goal. In this case, the team may decide what other resources or efforts are necessary to maintain the success.
- The interventions have been partially successful. Some modifications and more time may be needed. In this case the instructional decision making process continues.
- The interventions have not been successful and different materials, strategies or interventions need to be tried. The team will determine if there is a need to continue working toward the goal with additional resources, more time, etc. The team may also consider the need for additional support and instruction using special education services.



## When the Instructional Decision Making Team Considers Special Education Services...

If special education services are to be considered, the team will:

- ask you for permission
  - to gather additional information or
  - consider the use of information already gathered during the instructional intervention(s) and
- inform you of your parental rights.

**After** the information is gathered, the team will:

- ask you to continue to be involved in decisions regarding whether special education services are appropriate and what specific services will be provided for your child,
- develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This document will describe the goals, how they will be monitored, and how you will be informed about your child's progress.

**Instructional Decision Making is a process to help students be successful learners.**



# Contact Information

## What are some common suggestions for me?

- Share information with the teacher about your child's strengths and interests.
- Ask the teacher to "show" you your child's progress on an assignment or goal.
- Contact your child's teacher if you have a question about information you have received or you would like to receive.
- Use voice mail, a notebook or email to keep in touch with your child's teacher.
- Express appreciation when the teacher or others are helpful to you and/or your child.
- Be persistent if you need more information about your child's learning needs.
- Consider scheduling a visit to your child's school or classroom.

Your school contact person is:

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Telephone:

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**Our mission is to ensure  
success for all learners.**



**GRANT WOOD**  
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