



## **BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES: PRIVATE CONSULTANTS IN PWCS CLASSROOMS**

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Parents sometimes seek input from outside resources and private companies. This document provides guidance to school administrators as they respond to parental requests for PWCS staff to be involved with private providers.

- Division staff shall not recommend or give input to parents regarding private providers or their qualifications.
- Therapists and consultants from private providers may not conduct classroom observations. If appropriate and not disruptive, principals may permit private therapists and consultants to talk with staff about the student. PWCS will not be responsible for any costs associated with such discussion. A release must be obtained from the parents prior to the meeting or any discussion between school staff and private providers. The receipt of a release will not, however, obligate the school staff to hold a consultation meeting.
- If the parents requested an observation due to any concerns about the child's education, and the student is receiving special education services, then an IEP meeting must be scheduled. The purpose of the meeting is to respond to the parental concern that is the basis for the private observation or other instructional request. The school administrator should consult with the Office of Special Education Cluster Support team during the planning for the IEP meeting.

### **1. Plan the IEP Meeting:**

- Investigate the need(s) of the student that the parent believes will be addressed by the private service.
- Investigate the specialized services the parent may be requesting and how they can be made available to the student through school staff or otherwise if the IEP team determines they are required.
- Investigate how PWCS can address / is addressing the need if in agreement that it is present.
  - PWCS employs expert staff in specialized areas, Division wide (e.g. behavior, autism), and can provide most services required for the provision of FAPE.
  - If the IEP determines a service is required for FAPE that cannot be provided by Division staff, PWCS must obtain the service by other means.



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2. Schedule an IEP meeting:
  - To ensure the availability of OSE staff with the appropriate expertise to attend the meeting, involve them early in the scheduling.
  - Parents may bring their own experts at their own expense.
3. Conduct the IEP Meeting:
  - During the meeting, solicit from the parent the specific needs they feel will be met by the services.
  - Ensure the IEP team considers all information including the input of the parents and any private providers.
  - If the IEP team agrees the need is present, revise the IEP to include the necessary services to ensure the provision of FAPE for the student.
  - Add the position of the staff member providing the service to the IEP. In some cases, these needs are addressed through accommodations, supports to staff, or program supports, and are provided by Division employees.
- Requests for private observations as part of an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at public expense for students with disabilities are permitted and should be considered and scheduled through the school administrator once approval for the IEE has been provided by the Office of Special Education. A school administrator or a central office special education staff member must remain in the classroom during all classroom observations by the private evaluator.