

OPERATIONS

THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT STAFF GUIDELINES**Purpose**

Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS) and/or Behavior Specialist (BSC) from outside Mental Health Agencies (MHA) are placed and accepted in Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District schools through the student's IEP team and with the agreement of the building principal. This is conditional upon MHA determining the need for the TSS to be used at school. A decision made by the outside MHA that a TSS is no longer necessary for a student, will in no way obligate the district to provide the same or similar service.

Guidelines to following working with the TSS assigned to students in Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District:

1. Acts 33/34 and 151 clearances must be on file in the District Personnel Office.
2. The agency must provide to the building principal and to the supervisor of special education a letter listing the agency's address, the name of a contact person and a telephone number.
3. Agency identification badges or an adapted district visitor badge must be worn by the TSS while on duty in the school or on school grounds.
 - TSS/BSC report to the office, sign in and wait until cleared to go to the classroom by building secretary or building principal.
4. Prior to working with the student, the TSS/BS will meet with the principal and appropriate teacher(s) to discuss expectations, the IEP behavior plan(s), building procedures, etc. Set items 10, 11, 12, and 13.
5. The district will not approve schedules for multiple TSS/BSC for one student in the same time slot unless it is determined to be therapeutically appropriate.
6. The agency, not the school district, is responsible for securing/arranging for a substitute for the TSS when absent, and either the agency or the TSS must notify the school of the absence and provide the name of the substitute.
7. The TSS/BSC will immediately notify the building principal of any change in status.
8. The TSS/BSC will accept direction from the teacher in whose room they are assigned or to whom the student goes for instruction.
9. All information observed and/or heard by the TSS/BSC will be maintained as confidential.

10. In the event a TSS/BSC is not the student for a portion of the time (e.g., lunch, phone calls), he/she will be assigned to an area designated by the building principal as appropriate for the TSS/BSC staff. Meetings are not to take place in the classroom.
11. The IEP team works with the agency to develop the appropriate schedule for the TSS/BSC. TSS/BSC assignment/schedule changes must be communicated between the IEP team and MHA.
12. In order to ensure that both the school and agency are on the same page, specific directions/instruction for the TSS/BSC will be developed by the student's IEP team and outlined in writing. Classroom instruction and student discipline is the responsibility of the teacher.
13. The IEP team and any behavior plan(s) developed by the IEP team or in collaboration with the IEP team by the MHA must be shared, as appropriate, with all staff involved with the student and with every teacher in whose class the student is assigned.
14. The TSS/BSC will provide the student's teacher any daily written observations of the student's behaviors or accommodations for which the TSS/BSC has been assigned. Copies of any related materials will be provided to the school staff and approved by either the principal or teacher before being sent home or given to the TSS/BSC.