

Guide to Student Re-Entry Supports

Effective school re-entry planning is essential for students transitioning back after significant absences due to psychiatric hospitalization or other crises. The re-entry plan should outline available services, define expectations, and specify supportive interventions and staff responsible for implementation and documentation.

Student Re-Entry Meeting Strategies:

1. Schedule a re-entry meeting with key stakeholders prior to the student's return to school. Stakeholders include all relevant school staff, the parent/guardian, and the student. *Note: S-Team (Student Support Team) and Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings should be documented as such. Educational decisions for students with IEPs must be discussed and decided through the IEP team process.*
2. Review any medical documentation provided by the parent/guardian. If no medical documentation is provided, ask the parent/guardian to sign a release of information. Include the school nurse in discussions of medical/medication information if applicable.
3. Assign a point person, such as a school counselor or social worker, to monitor and support the student. This should be a trusted or preferred staff member to the student. The point person should assist the student in accessing and utilizing behavioral and academic supports.
4. Determine whether a safety plan is needed. A safety plan should include the following:
 - a. Identify a trusted adult(s) and safe space(s) in the school building. The adult can be the same as the point person identified in the strategy above.
 - b. Clearly list all supports available (e.g., daily check-ins, use of breaks).
 - c. Ensure that the student knows how to access the supports provided.
 - d. Inform appropriate school staff of the student's permission to access these supports.
 - e. Document the frequency and duration that the student accesses identified supports. This will help determine which supports are effective.
 - f. Document communication with parent/guardian.
5. Provide caregivers with regular feedback, ideally through the designated point person. Ask the parent/guardian to keep the point person informed of changes in the student's progress, treatment, and needs.
6. Conduct a needs assessment (formal or informal) to identify potential barriers to school re-entry and offer support and resources to the student and family.
7. Obtain permission from the parent/guardian to share the re-entry plan with appropriate staff.
8. Discuss as a team whether further testing or evaluation of the student is needed and refer for additional supports as needed (e.g., 504 plan, RTI², psychological testing).

Other Considerations:

- Address academic needs and develop plans for missed work and ongoing academic support.
- Plan with the student and parent how to handle questions related to the student's absence.
- Maintain strict confidentiality about the student's condition and ensure that communication with school staff is focused on relevant information and student supports.

Conclusion

Successful student reintegration into the school environment requires coordination, clear communication, and a focus on student wellness and academic recovery. Schools play a critical role in fostering a supportive environment to help students and families navigate this transition. See appendices A and B for additional guidance.

Additional Resources

[Best Practice Guideline for Mental Health Crisis Services](#)

[SAMSHA: Build a Safety Plan Video](#)

References

- Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute. (2023, January 9). *How teachers can support students returning to school after a mental health crisis and hospitalization*. Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute.
<https://www.georgetownbehavioral.com/blog/how-teachers-can-support-students-returning-to-school-after-a-mental-health-crisis-and-hospitalization>
- Marraccini, M. E., & Pittleman, C. (2021). Returning to school following hospitalization for suicide-related behaviors: Recognizing student voices for improving practice. *School Psychology Review*, 51(3), 370–385.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2020.1862628>
- UCLA School Mental Health Project. (n.d.). *Mental health in hospitals: A guide for school-based mental health professionals*. UCLA School Mental Health Project. <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/hospital.pdf>

Appendix A

Student Re-Entry Meeting Agenda Template

1. **Welcome and Introductions:**
 - Participants (administrators, counselors, parents, student, etc.)
2. **Purpose of the Meeting:**
 - Overview of re-entry goals and objectives
3. **Student History Overview:**
 - Academic, behavioral, and social-emotional context (as appropriate)
4. **Re-Entry Plan Development:**
 - Discuss and confirm supports for academics, behavior, and mental health
 - Establish safety plan if needed
5. **Roles and Responsibilities:**
 - Assign key responsibilities to team members
6. **Communication Plan:**
 - Method and frequency of updates to caregivers and staff
7. **Q&A and Closing:**
 - Address questions from participants
 - Confirm next steps and follow-up meeting date

Appendix B

Student Re-Entry Plan Meeting Template

Note: A re-entry meeting does not take the place of a Student Support Team (S-Team) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting. S-Team and IEP meetings should be documented as such. Educational decisions for special education students must be discussed and decided through the IEP team process.

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

School: _____ **Grade:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Information: _____

School Staff Present in Meeting:

Student Needs/Goals:

Academic:

Behavioral:

Other:

Warning Signs of Needing Extra Support (as identified by the student and/or parent):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Coping Strategies:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Designated Point Person(s) and Location: _____

Other Supporting Staff: _____

Re-Entry Supports (Check all that apply):

___ Modified schedule

___ Medication management by school nurse

___ Social skills supports

___ Hallway escort

___ Specialized lunch plan

___ Check-in/Check-Out

___ Identified calm down/safe space

___ Additional breaks

___ Classroom behavior contract

___ Referral to Community Resources

___ Tutoring

___ Other: _____

Communication Plan:

Caregiver updates (frequency and method): _____

External mental health provider and contact information:

Progress Monitoring:

Identify who will track use of supports and method of tracking:

Review meetings (dates): _____



Additional Notes:

Community Resources/Referrals:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

School Personnel Signature: _____
