

SAMPLE PLAN
Advocacy Planning Guide

Date: January 1986

The problem is: My 8 year old son, who has a visual impairment and receives special education services, needs speech therapy. This service was not included in his annual individualized education plan and is not being provided.

The ideal solution is: I believe Ryan needs two half-hour individualized speech therapy sessions from a qualified speech therapist, and one hour of group speech therapy each week to be successful in school and benefit from FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education).

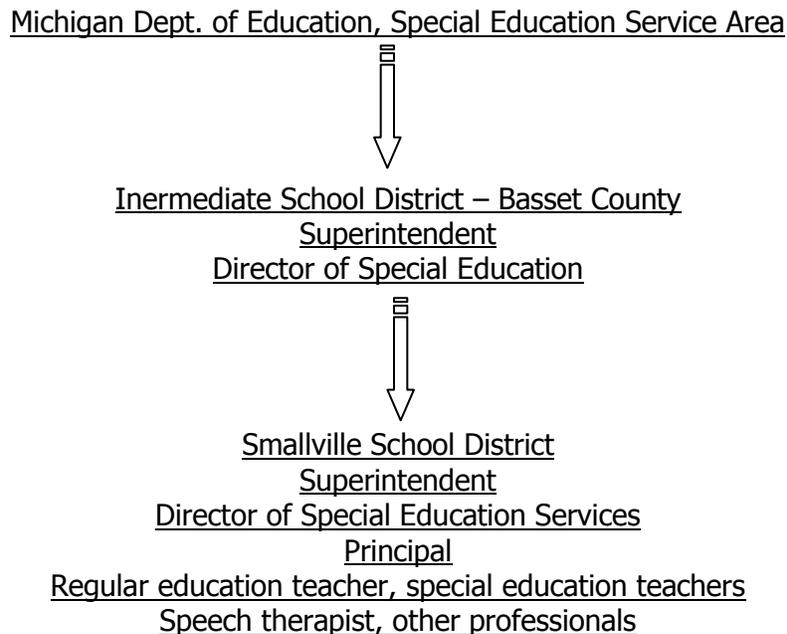
An alternate acceptable solution is: I believe Ran needs two one-hour group speech therapy sessions per week from a qualified speech therapist, and that he needs a speech therapist to show his regular classroom teacher how to work with him to improve his speech.

Who has authority to make changes:

Name: John Grant*
Position: Special Education Director
Agency: Smallville School District
Address: 100 Main
Smallville, Mi 49100
Telephone: (517) 891-9444

*As a result of a decision by Ryan's ARD Committee

Notes on the chain of command:



INFORMATION I NEED TO SUPPORT MY VIEWS

Information I already have:

1. Ryan is eligible for special education based on the fact that he is legally blind.
2. I have observed that Ryan says words “funny.” He doesn’t pronounce certain letters, especially: L, R, S, T and TH. He has done this since he learned to talk.
3. The Michigan Special Education Rules say that speech therapy may be provided as a related service.
4. These rules also say: (1)related services are those services needed in order for a student to benefit from special education. (2)a student shall be evaluated in all areas of suspected disability, (3)ARD Committees determine services needed and ARD Committee meetings may be convened when necessary.
5. Last month our family doctor said Ryan has not outgrown his speech problems and suggested I look into speech therapy.
6. I had a conversation with Ryan’s teacher. She said she has noticed Ryan’s speech problem. He is becoming reluctant to talk in class because some of his classmates tease him about his speech.
7. According to current research about children’s language development, children who don’t outgrow speech problems by the age of five or six, they should receive speech therapy.

Information I still need to obtain:

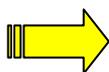
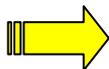
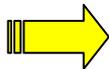
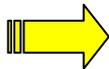
Ryan needs a speech evaluation to determine what he needs to improve his speech. We must rule out the possibility of a hearing problem – he needs a hearing test. I need to learn and understand the procedures for requesting a new ARD Committee meeting – consult an advocate.

My arguments:

-  Ryan will have to work hard for social acceptance and job success because of his visual impairment. A speech deficit will compound the problem. It is correctable and should be treated.
-  He needs the service to participate fully and benefit from his education – his classroom participation in the classroom because of his embarrassment.
-  The service is available under special education law.
-  Ryan’s family doctor has recommended it.

Arguments the other party may make:

1. Ryan will outgrow his speech problem – therapy is not needed.
2. No speech problem has been observed.
3. No staff or money to provide the service.
4. They'll make me feel guilty for asking for too much since Ryan already receives teacher consultant services and adaptive aids for his visual impairment.



My counter-arguments:

1. Ryan has not outgrown the problem. Children who outgrow the problem have done so by Ryan's age.
2. Observations of the problem have been made by me, Ryan's doctor and his teacher.
3. Lack of staff/money is not a valid excuse for not providing a needed service.
4. Services are to be individualized to need student's needs.

My Plan:

- 👉 Call Ryan's teacher and schedule a teacher conference to discuss the problem. Call tomorrow 1/14.
- 👉 Ask the school to conduct a hearing test and a speech and language evaluation – write letter immediately after teacher conference 1/22.
- 👉 Ask family doctor to write a letter recommending the evaluation. Call tomorrow 1/14.
- 👉 Call advocate to find out how to ask for a new ARD Committee meeting and to review my advocacy plan. Call tomorrow 1/14.
- 👉 As for a new ARD Committee meeting. Write letter? 1/15.
- 👉 I'll tape record Ryan's speech. Tonight.
- 👉 Arrange for someone to attend the ARD Committee meeting with me for moral support. Call Mrs. Jones, Parent Advisory Committee representative. 1/15.
- 👉 Attend ARD Committee meeting. Mrs. Jones will take notes so I can listen actively – 2/15?
- 👉 Take new service plan home to review before signing.
- 👉 Sign plan if acceptable.
- 👉 Follow-up to make sure services are delivered.
 - Talk to Ryan
 - Talk to Ryan's teacher
 - Visit on a scheduled therapy day

If My Plan Doesn't Work:

- 👉 Call advocate for ideas
- 👉 Ask for another ARD committee meeting
- 👉 Ask for a hearing