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# Secondary STEPS Program

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*SUCCESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE POSITIVE SUPPORT*

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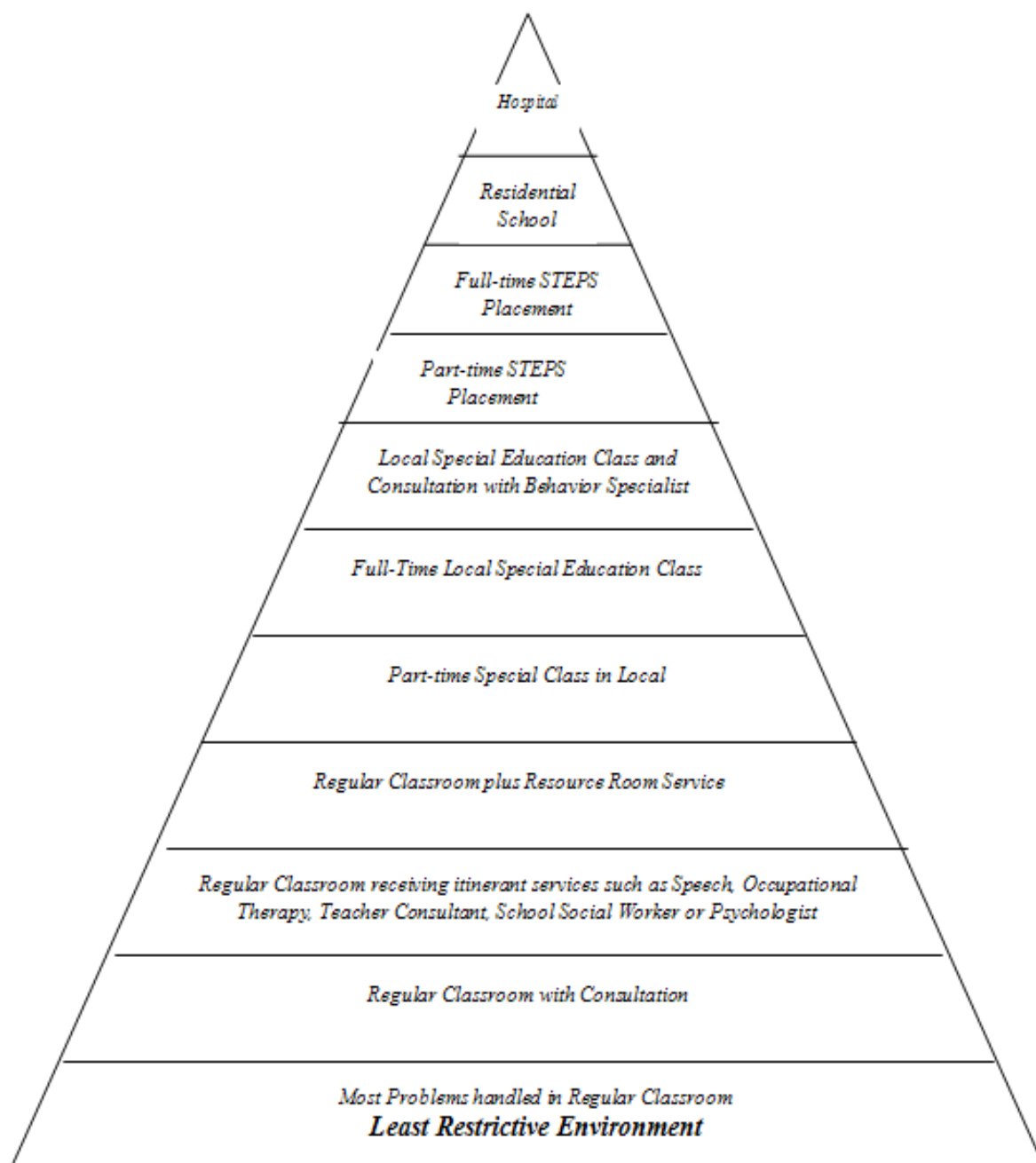
## **Purpose and Philosophy**

The purpose of this handbook is to inform the students, parents, guardians, and other interested persons of the various components, policies, and procedures of the STEPS (Success Through Effective Positive Support) Program. The STEPS Program is an alternative placement for students with severe emotional impairment and behavioral challenges. The program is operated by the Huron Intermediate School District and located in the Huron Area Technical Center (HATC). The intent of this program is to provide a short-term placement for eligible students by providing an intensive social skills component within an educational setting.

Through this cooperative effort, an individualized educational plan is designed and implemented using a modified version of the Girls and Boys Town Model of Specialize Classroom Management. The purpose is to allow students to return to less restrictive settings as soon as they are able to meet the established behavioral criteria.

The overall goal of the STEPS Program is to maximize the students' learning potential, teach students to understand and manage their behavior, afford students the opportunity to enhance their self-esteem, encourage students to develop independence and, at all times, preserve students' dignity and self-worth.

**Huron Intermediate School District  
Continuum of Services**



## **STEPS Program Admittance Process and Eligibility Criteria**

The eligibility criteria assume that the student is currently identified as having an Emotional Impairment and the required rules 340.1706 and 340.1721a have been met. In unique cases, other special education eligibilities may be considered.

- A relevant and current Functional Behavioral Assessment must be completed by the sending schools social worker (as approved by the STEPS Committee) and a specific behavior plan designed to address the areas of serious concern are in place at the discretion of the STEPS Program Committee.
- Documentation of a relevant and current behavior plan addressing the current serious behaviors and duration of each intervention tried denoting expected results and actual results
- Completed behavior checklist and additional pertinent information
- Documentation of current grades. Student must be at risk of educational failure due to emotional and behavioral concerns.
- Current IEP, including goals specific to student's behavior and progress on goals. Specific goals have been developed through the IEP process related to the behaviors of serious concern with data indicating expected results and actual results.
- Student must be eligible for special education programs and services.
- STEPS must be the least restrictive environment option for the student as determined by the STEPS Committee.
- Student placement must be determined through the IEP process at which STEPS Program committee must have representation present.
- Student, family, and LEA must understand and agree that the overall goal of the STEPS program is to transition the student back into the local school. The STEPS Program is a short-term placement.
- Special application steps must be taken prior to consideration of the program
- Agreement from LEA's, parents/guardians to attend monthly staffings and all IEP meetings.
- Signed Parent/Guardian permission for Interagency Release/Exchange of Information with agencies that the student and family are involved with.
- Documented home-school communications must have occurred on a consistent basis.

- Direct student contact with itinerant staff (teacher consultant, school psychologist, school social worker) or appropriate local agencies is in place.
- Placement in the local school full inclusion program, special education room 40%-50%, OR placement in a local district categorical classroom 75%-85% has been documented. Reason: When moving to the most restrictive STEPS Program, the local district must place the student in the maximum time available for special education intervention with the LEA or clearly justify as to why the STEPS Program is the most appropriate placement.
- Specific behaviors and incidents have been documented over an extended period of time (90 days minimum according to the Michigan Monitoring Standards).

Upon receipt of application, the STEPS Program Committee\* will review the submitted application and proceed with a case investigation. A report of the completed investigation will be drafted with the disposition and recommendations within 5 school days.

\* The STEPS Program Standing Committee membership may include, but is not limited to, the following individuals:

HISD Administrator  
HISD STEPS Program Teacher  
HISD STEPS Program Paraprofessional

Use the **STEPS Application Checklist Form** to document the criteria listed above. This form must be completed and submitted to the HLC Assistant Principal, Katie Kolar. Occasionally it may be necessary to offer additional supports or recommendations prior to further consideration for placement. HISD administrators will consider exceptional circumstances and emergency placements on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the STEPS Program Committee with final acceptance pending their approval. Once the committee recommends placement in the STEPS Program, the LEA with the STEPS Committee representatives will organize an IEP meeting before a change of placement may occur.

## STEPS Application

### Basic Information:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Class type: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours in Special Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Certification: \_\_\_\_\_

IEP Date: \_\_\_\_\_

MET Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### Criteria for Entrance (check those that apply):

- History of significant assaultive behavior (include documentation)
- History of significant self-abusive behavior (include documentation)
- History of significant damage to school property (include documentation)
- Psychiatric evaluation within the past year that clearly states a significant disturbance that requires STEPS Program placement (attach evaluation)
- Recently released from 24 hour Emotionally Impaired Facility (include release summary)
- Transfer student from segregated Emotionally Impaired Program
- History of repetitive behavioral difficulties

### Presentation of Problem:

History (include overview of behavior problems, discipline reports, and copies of current behavior plan, medical concerns, etc...):

Present status (attach discipline reports, suspension letters, etc...):

Briefly summarize parent conferences, level of cooperation, etc...:

Affective goals and objectives (attach a copy of goals and objectives from current IEP and progress to date):

Which of these goals cannot be met in the current program? Why not?

What was the target behavior of the management plan? (Attach plan with documented results)

List four things that the student likes or will work for:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**Additional information:**

Is the student in foster care?	Yes	No
If yes, which agency:		

Is the student involved with the courts?	Yes	No
If yes, which court:	Probation Officer:	

Do you suspect substance abuse problems?	Yes	No
Do you suspect the student was physically abused?	Yes	No
Do you suspect the student was sexually abused?	Yes	No



**Support Services:**

Consultation to teacher(s) provided by:

Results:

Student counseling provided by:

Results:

Other services provided by:

Results:

Additional Comments:

People present while completing Entry Criteria:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEA Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEA Special Education Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Social Worker

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEA General Education Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Other

\_\_\_\_\_  
Other

### Application Documentation Checklist

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_  
IEP DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SENDING SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_  
MET DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

- STEPS Application completed
- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Behavior Plan in place
- Counseling Services in place
- Current IEP Goals consistent with student's difficulties (behavioral and academic)
- Disciplinary documentation consistent/appropriate
- Documentation of home-school communication present
- Current MET
- Student grades encompassing the last two years
- Signed copy of release of information from parent or guardian
- Documentation of Home-School communication present
- Behavior Intervention Checklist

Upon receipt of application, the STEPS Program Committee will review the submitted application and required documentation and proceed with a case investigation. A report of the completed investigation will be drafted within 5 school days with the disposition and recommendations.

Documentation of *each* of the above is required by the LEA prior to placement consideration.

**STEPS Program Placement Agreement  
for Students leaving a 24-hour Psychiatric Facility**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Age: \_\_\_\_\_

The above student is being released from the following twenty-four hour facility:

Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on staffing results, there is reason to believe that this student may be successful in a less restrictive program within the local district and will be placed in the following school:

School District/Building: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent, Principal/Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Person Calling Staffing: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Staffing: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested target behaviors for the next thirty school days:

- 1.
- 2.

Immediate STEPS Program placement can be obtained within the next thirty school days, with appropriate documentation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal of Local School District

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher of Local School District

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Criteria for Immediate STEPS Program Entry Placement of Transfer Students

Procedure:

1. Student arrives in your LEA and there is evidence that the student is Emotionally Impaired and was previously enrolled in:
  - A) A separate public school facility for students with severe emotional and or behavioral difficulties.
  - B) A public school E.I. Categorical Program
  - C) A 24 hour Facility Care Program
2. LEA will follow up with previous placement staff and, at a minimum, ask the **Contact Questions**.
3. LEA will complete a Request for Records form, obtain parent signature and send to previous placement.
4. LEA will have the most recent IEP and MET faxed as soon as possible to (989) 269-3403.
5. Social Worker will coordinate an intake for the identified student at the STEPS Program. A thirty-day placement may be implemented at the STEPS Program.
6. See the Entry Criteria for alternative placement at STEPS Program.

### SENDING DISTRICTS RESPONSIBILITY

- Provide transportation to and from STEPS Program, regardless of the amount of time being served
- Assign student with credit for the course once STEPS has recommended the grade
- A local representative must participate in monthly staffings (i.e. counselor, principal, special education teacher, social worker, administrator)
- Provide the present level of performance for the student with accompanying educational goals and an Educational Development Plan (EDP) when necessary
- STEPS students who also attend their local district will be responsible for taking a Goal Card to their local district and having each individual teacher fill out the card appropriately. It is the student's responsibility to return the filled out card to the STEPS Program teacher. It is the responsibility of the teacher to fill out the card daily upon request.
- Notify STEPS in a timely manner of bus misconduct or any major or repetitive behavioral difficulties that occur (i.e. office referrals, suspensions)
- In the event of a school delay, STEPS Program will not start until noon. Lunch will not be provided

- To provide standardized testing (MEAP or MiAccess) and county-wide benchmark testing to students who spend the majority of their school day at the local district
- To complete Medicaid forms on students who spend the majority of their school day at the local district

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF STEPS PROGRAM**

- Provide students with daily course lessons and instruction as agreed upon in the IEP.
- Provide students with social skills instruction.
- Develop and consistently follow a behavior plan following the Girls and Boys Town Specialized Classroom Management Model.
- Provide local district with recommended grade for courses taken.
- Contact parents/guardian, local school agency and/or community agency regarding behavior and/or academic progress on a regular basis.
- Provide locals with follow up support to ensure student success.
- Provide lunch for those students who are present during the time lunch is served.
- To provide standardized testing (MEAP or MiAccess) to students who spend the majority of their school day at the STEPS Program.
- To complete Medicaid forms on students who spend the majority of their school day at the STEPS Program.

### **PARENT/STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

- Student will follow local district's school calendar including early dismissals and inclement weather (in the case of delays the STEPS Program will not run until noon).
- Sign STEPS contract, Parent Agreement Form, and Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.
- Actively participate in monthly staffings and IEP meetings and provide thoughts, ideas and suggestions to ensure the success of your child/self. *PARENT INPUT AND INVOLVEMENT IS VERY VALUABLE!*
- In addition to following STEPS Program expectations and local district school rules, STEPS students will abide by all rules outlined in the Huron Learning Center Student Handbook. Parents and students will be required to sign a form stating they have read and understand the rules and expectations outlined.
- Follow Severe Weather Policy of the local school district
- STEPS students attending their local district will be responsible for taking a Goal Card and having their individual teachers fill out the card and initial appropriately. It is the responsibility of the student to return the filled out card to STEPS Program teacher.
- Complete all necessary forms:
  1. Emergency card
  2. Provide copy of Immunization Record
  3. Complete a lunch form
  4. Provide copy of Birth Certificate

5. Complete a Medication Form (only if there are any medications that are taken during school hours)
6. Sign a release of information
7. Sign an acknowledgment form for the use of Seclusion and Restraint

### **Student/Parent/Guardian Rights**

1. The parent, student, or guardian has the right and responsibility to be present and participate at any meeting that involves the design and finalization of a behavioral plan including those that involve the use of physical management techniques.
2. The student has the right to receive the least punitive consequences possible, without jeopardizing the rights or safety of other students and staff. Staff must have data that less punitive approaches have not been successful in controlling the undesirable behavior before an intrusive and/or physical management program can be implemented, except in an emergency situation. Parents will be notified within in 24-hours of such restraint or seclusion.
3. The parent or guardian has the right to call an IEP at any time to discuss the specific behavior intervention plan and/or academic plan developed for their student. They may invite others of their choice to attend.
4. The student has the right to have the behavior plan developed and used by trained professional staff.
5. The student has the right to have his or her progress, as it is related to behavioral and academic goals, monitored by regular and reliable data collection.
6. The parent, student, and/or guardian have the right to review this data at any time.
7. The parent and/or guardian have the right to observe classroom staff's use of the educational and/or behavioral plan in class and during school hours. Prior arrangements must be made with the STEPS Program teacher and/or administrator. Parents/guardians must abide by the policy and guidelines outlined in the Huron Learning Center Student Handbook.

### **Attendance Requirements and Procedures**

STEPS students will follow their local district calendar. In the event that the Huron Learning Center is closed and the local district is not, the STEPS Program will NOT run. See your local district calendar for the schedule. However, in the event that a local school is delayed or closed and the STEPS Program is still operating, parents may bring their STEPS student to the HLC during the student's regularly scheduled time. Although TAT will pick up students from a

district that is delayed, they will not enter into a district if it is closed. If parents cannot provide transportation, the student will not have that day count against them.

The school district emphasizes the value of regular attendance in enabling students to benefit from the school's education programs. Michigan law places responsibility on each student to attend school on a daily basis, and on each parent or guardian to send their child to school on a daily basis. More important, however, is the effect of regular and punctual attendance on the student's educational achievement. Regular school attendance also helps develop positive traits such as punctuality, dependability and self-discipline that are important vocational skills needed later in life. Not only is each day's lesson important to the individual student, the student's participation in class contributes to the education of others

### ***Excused Absence***

One where the parent or guardian has called his/her child's teacher or the Huron Learning Center office by 9:00 a.m. the day of absence to report an illness. In cases where parents do not have a phone, a written excuse signed by the parent shall be submitted the first day the student is back in school. ***In the event that a student is transported by Thumb Area Transit (TAT) it is the responsibility of the parent to call and cancel TAT transportation for that day.***

### ***Unexcused Absence***

One in which the parent or guardian has not called or written the school to report an absence, student is known to be "skipping," or a doctor's note has not been received for a student with three or more absences due to illness. Secondary students will follow their local district's policy regarding attendance and earning credit. STEPS students missing more than 10 days in a semester (or 7 days in a trimester) will be referred directly to the HISD Truancy Officer. In all cases of an unexcused absence, parents will be contacted and apprised of the absence by the classroom teacher.

Absences from school for reasons other than illness are discouraged. Excessive unexcused absences may result in loss of credit for the marking period(s). Probation officers will be notified for students involved in the court system or other relevant individuals or agencies.

## **Student Awareness of Handbook Requirements**

The STEPS Program will review the STEPS Program Student/Parent Handbook and the Huron Learning Center Handbook. The STEPS teacher is responsible for the Handbook review and will document that the student has been informed of the various rules, procedures and requirements contained in this handbook. Specific items of the handbook will be reviewed at the beginning of each marking period.

To assure us that each parent has received a copy of the Student/Parent Handbook, each parent and student will sign the "Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Handbook." Any student who shares time between attending the two programs will be responsible for and expected to follow all requirements for each program.

## **Instruction**

The STEPS Program offers a wide range of academic programs based on student need. The academic goal for each student is to bring his/her academic performance to its maximum, given the student's abilities. Academic focus for STEPS Program students will be discussed and agreed upon in the IEP meeting.

As secondary students enter the STEPS Program, emphasis is placed upon credits required for graduation. A schedule of class requirements is developed to assure the student a fulfillment of graduation requirements. The STEPS Program recommends credit or a grade to the student as agreed in the IEP and the local district is responsible for awarding the grade.

### **Girls and Boys Town Social Skills Curriculum**

The Girls and Boys Town Social Skills curriculum provides the foundation for a structured educational approach to the socialization of school-age children. The curriculum offers a well-defined set of social behaviors encompassing, Adult Relations, Peer Relations, School Rules, and Classroom Behaviors. This set of skills assist teachers to go beyond merely labeling problem behaviors (i.e. compulsive talker, lazy, restless, etc...), which often hinders identifying specific alternative behaviors that should be promoted, reinforced, strengthened, or taught.

The Girls and Boys Town Specialized Classroom Management Program is firmly rooted in principles of applied behavior analysis and social learning theory. Its underlying premise is that behavior is learned through feedback on behavior and its environmental consequences. The models focus is on teaching because troubled youth have social skill deficiencies and have not yet learned or been effectively instructed on how to interact in a socially appropriate way with others. This behavioral model involves the identification of desirable pro-social behavioral expectations, the effective use of instructional strategies to teach those expectations, the application of an incentive system, and the effective implementation of reinforcement principles.

The system, including the motivation component, will be described to parents and students prior to entry into the program. At any time parents are welcome to contact the STEPS Program instructor to ask questions or get clarification on the system.

### **Support Services**

The STEPS Program has access to a variety of support services as important components of total programming for students. Below are support services offered and a brief description of each. Services are available to students based on need as determined by the IEP team.

**Teacher Consultant:** Offers diagnostic and consultative services regarding academic instruction.



**Speech and Language Therapist:** Offers direct therapy for students with speech and language difficulties.

**Occupational Therapist:** Offers direct and/or consultative assistance to students and teachers who require physical adaptations in the learning environment.

**Physical Therapist:** Offers assistance in physical mobility for students who require special training.

**School Social Worker:** Offers direct and/or consultative assistance to students both individually and/or in groups to focus on individual social needs of the student.

**Paraprofessional:** Offers direct assistance to students both individually and/or in groups to focus on academic and social needs.

### **Monthly STEPS Staffings**

To help ensure the success of our students it is important for all persons involved with each student to communicate with one another on a regular basis. Monthly staffing will be scheduled at an agreed upon time and will last 20 minutes each. Participants in the staffing will include Parents/Guardians, Students, STEPS Program Teacher, STEPS Program Administrator, Local District Representatives (counselor, SSW, teacher, administrator), and other relevant outside agencies (probation officers, case workers, counselors). Attendance at these meetings is a critical part in the success of our students in the STEPS Program.

## **STEPS Program Exit Criteria**

Procedural steps for students leaving the STEPS Program and entering a local school program full time:

1. STEPS Committee will complete an Exit Criteria Form to include successful reintegration to general education and/or special education.
2. STEPS Committee will call a staffing to be held with potential receiving school. Staffing to include:
  - a. STEPS Program Administrator
  - b. Potential Caseload Teacher/Special Education Site Facilitator
  - c. Local School Social Worker/MET Representative
  - d. Local School Administrator
  - e. STEPS Program Teacher
3. Upon consensus, a timeline is established

### Exit Consideration

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Receiving School District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

SSN: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Entrance into Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe behavior progress since entering the STEPS Program. Attach Individual Plans and/or contracts and observations.
  
2. Current Level attained (duration on level):
  
3. Describe current academic levels and/or credit status:
  
4. Describe family contacts and cooperation (Teacher and Counselor):
  
5. Is the student involved with the courts?    Yes        No        If yes, describe:
  
6. Is attendance a problem?        Yes    No        If yes, describe:
  
7. Is bus behavior a problem?    Yes    No        If yes, describe:
  
8. Continuing needs of the student behaviorally and academically:

9. Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Recommendations:

10. Specialized Programs/Services under consideration:

Local District Resource Room	Local District Categorical Room
LEA Teacher's Name:	Certification Area:
Continued Placement in EI Room	Rationale:

11. Receiving school's Special Education team input/concerns:

12. After Care Plan to be developed collaboratively at the staffing. Person(s) responsible for developing and implementing After Care Plan:

Committee Members Present while completing Exit Criteria:

_____ Parent/Guardian	_____ Student
_____ STEPS Program Instructor	_____
_____ School Social Worker	_____ STEPS Administrator
_____ LEA Administrator	_____ LEA General Education Teacher
_____ LEA Special Ed Teacher	_____ Other

**Agreement and Consent Form**

**Parental/Guardian/Student Agreement**

We/I the parent(s)/guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_, agree that our involvement is critical in the development of responsible behavior in my/our child. The behavior problems exhibited recently by my child indicate the need for changes in his/her entire environment. It has been agreed up on by the IEP team that the STEPS Program is the Least Restrictive Environment for my child at this time. The STEPS Program is intended to be a short-term placement for my child in hopes that he/she gains the skills needed to transition back into his/her local district. I have been explained and understand the Girls and Boys Town Expectations and the Specialized Classroom Management Model to be used within the STEPS Program.

In addition, I fully understand that my child will follow all rules of the Huron Learning Center and their local sending district as outlined in each handbook. At any time should I have questions or concerns regarding my child or the program I am aware that it is my responsibility to contact a STEPS Program Committee Member to set up an appointment.

I have read and understand all of the contents of the STEPS Program Handbook and agree to abide by it. I also agree to participate in the following ways:

1. Participate in all monthly staffing and IEP meetings
2. Cooperate with staff recommendations
3. Communicate concerns, challenges, hopes, and desires with staff on a continuing basis
4. Encourage and support all STEPS Program expectations and building rules

My signature indicates that I have read, understand, and agree to the procedures and policies outlined within this handbook, that of the Huron Learning Center and the STEPS Program Parent-Student Handbook. In addition, I have been given and understand the Acceptable Use Policy (for use of technology).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date