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## Students with School Phobia

Some students begin to manifest issues and challenges of physically attending a school building, as a result of a multitude of factors. It is recommended that the student's emotional well-being be addressed first and foremost and then a transition plan to integrate that student into the school building and become part of the school community must be implemented.

The process of transitioning a student with significant challenges of physically attending a school building has no pre-determined time lines for success in any given step along the transition plan. The student will experience challenges along the process, but with individual counseling services and intense positive behavioral supports, the student will eventually make the necessary progress to fully integrate to a full day attendance at the school.

The process is as follows:

- A home visit: The purpose of the home visit is to introduce the student to potentially a familiar face in the school building, thus reducing anxiety in an environment that may seem foreign to the student. The goal of the home visit is also to potentially have the student agree to an action plan that includes visiting the school building.
- School building visit: The purpose of the building visit is to take a tour of the facility. Showing the student first-hand where all the classes, bathrooms and offices are located, which provides the student an opportunity without fully committing to a full school day the location of items. The goal of the visit is to make an agreement with the student to potentially return to the school for a limited time.
- Attendance: Regular attendance at school is critical for long term progress and success academically, socially and emotionally. The purpose of a structured, but compassionate attendance schedule allows the student who has difficulty being within a school building the ability to grow and meet success at their own pace. The goal is to have the student agree to a limited attendance schedule, which increases both time and academic requirements as the student progresses. Ultimately, the overall goal is a full day integration into the appropriate classroom and full implementation of the academic goals and objectives outlined in the student's IEP.

An example of a limited attendance schedule:

Day 1: A visit in the main office with the Principal for 10 minutes.

Day 2: A visit in the main office with the Principal for 10 minutes with a short assignment with the Principal or an Aide

Day 3: A walking tour of the building, and visit with the Principal for 5 minutes

Day 4: A walking tour of the building and visit with the Principal for 10 minutes

Day 5: A visit with the Executive Director for 15 minutes

Day 6: A visit with the Executive Director for 15 minutes, then a visit with the Principal for 15 minutes and attempt to each lunch in the school building.

## Services Provided:

1. To assist and support the student's progress and success, an assigned school social worker will work with the student individually. The same social worker will be the assigned social worker to implement the mandated counseling services outlined in the IEP. Once a full day integration has taken place, the student will also receive group counseling once a week.
2. A certified special education teacher shall also be assigned as a liaison for the student to transition and provide additional academic support both during the transition phase and in the assigned classroom of study.
3. All staff at Washington Academy are certified and trained in two different de-escalation techniques, Handle with Care and Crisis Prevention (CPI). A staff member whom the student can develop a positive relationship with, shall also be assigned to that student in cases of crisis, emotional need or a friendly face. In the Handle with Care program this is known as a "solid object" and is critical for the overall health and safety of the student as they deal with real anxiety and emotional stress.