

Statewide TBI Educational Community of Practice

A statewide TBI Educational Community of Practice (CoP) was established in 2001 and currently has a membership that includes regional school TBI specialists, parents, and representatives from community agencies who serve children and youth with TBI.

The TBI CoP meets twice a year to address regional and statewide professional development needs, and supports increased interagency collaboration through the development of electronic resources, special projects and initiatives.

Professional Resources

To view or download the Minnesota TBI criteria, manual, resource materials, TBI list serv information or professional development opportunities, visit the Minnesota Low Incidence Projects website at: www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/tbi.html

The content of this brochure does not necessarily represent the policy of the federal Department of Education or the state Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the federal or state government. Funding for this brochure is made possible with a grant from MN Department of Education. The source of the funds is federal award Special Education – Program to States, CFDA 84.027A

Statewide School Specialist for Traumatic Brain Injury

Kelly Bredeken, Minnesota Low Incidence Projects
kelly.bredeken@metroecsuo.org, 612.638.1506
Metro ECSU, 2 Pine Tree Drive, Suite 101
Arden Hills, MN 55112

Regional Low Incidence facilitator

Regions 1 & 2: Brenda Ackerson
backers@wao.k12.mn.us 218.745.5628 x1248

Region 3: Dena Hagen
dhagen@nlsec.k12.mn.us 218.879.1283 x 6006

Region 4: Jill Skarvold
jskarvold@lcsc.org 218.737.6521

Regions 5 & 7: Nan Records
nan.records@njpacoop.org 612.298.3270

Regions 6 & 8: Mary Palmer
Mary.Palmer@swsc.org 320.231.5302

Region 9: Erin Toninato
etoninato@mncsc.org 507.389.2123

Region 10: Christian Wernau
cwernau@zumbroed.org 507.775.2037

Region 11: Ingrid Aasan
ingrid.aasan@metroecsuo.org 612.638.1517

The local/regional TBI specialist for your area is:

Meeting the Needs of Students with Traumatic Brain Injury



School Services and Supports



Website: www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/tbi.html

Serving Students with TBI

Minnesota Rule 3525.1348 defines Traumatic Brain Injury as “an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability and/or psycho-social impairment that may adversely affect a child’s educational performance and result in the need for special education and related services. A TBI can result in difficulties with:

- cognition
- speech/language
- memory
- attention
- reasoning
- abstract thinking
- judgment
- problem solving
- perception
- motor and sensory abilities
- social interaction skills and behavior
- physical functions
- information processing

The state definition does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

Common Educational Needs and Supports

Traumatic brain injuries in children can affect many areas and functions within the brain. Since areas of the brain are interconnected, damage to any part of the system can often result in complex changes.

Educational programming, accommodations, and modifications to materials and the environment are individualized to meet each student’s unique needs. Some examples include:

- Altered schedule
- Assistive technology
- Support for transitions
- Organizational tools
- Memory aids
- Emotional/behavioral supports
- Modified assignments/tests/grading
- Additional review and reteaching

Information on these and other strategies can be found in the MN Low Incidence Projects publication entitled: “Meeting the Needs of Students with Traumatic Brain Injury: A Manual for Minnesota Educators” (revised 2013) at: www.mnlowincidenceprojects.org/tbiTrainingMaterials.html

TBI Eligibility Criteria

The IEP team should consider qualification for special education and related services under the category of TBI if the student meets the following criteria:

- There is documentation by a physician of a medically verified traumatic brain injury.
- There is a functional impairment attributable to the TBI

that adversely affects educational performance in one or more of seven listed areas.

- The functional impairments are not primarily the result of previously existing conditions.

Students who have an acquired non-traumatic brain injury as a result of infection, stroke, brain tumor, poisoning, or anoxic injury may have significant educational needs, but would not qualify under state TBI criteria. In such situations, eligibility under other special education categories should be considered by the IEP team, depending upon educational needs of the student identified in the evaluation. An additional option to consider for students with mild TBI or concussion who require educational accommodations is a 504 Plan.

School TBI Specialists

There is currently no teacher licensure for the category of TBI in Minnesota. However, it is strongly recommended that a school TBI specialist be involved in the special education evaluation and serve as a member of the IEP team for any student who qualifies under the category of TBI. A school TBI specialist is an educator who is both knowledgeable and experienced about TBI and the related educational implications it may have for learners. Professional competencies for the school TBI specialist can be found on the MN low Incidence Projects website, and Hamline University offers a graduate level TBI Certificate program. To find out who the TBI specialist is for your district or region, contact your regional low incidence facilitator or the statewide TBI specialist, which can be found on the back page of this brochure.