



Dubuque
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE
DELIVERY PLAN**

Dubuque Community School District
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**DISTRICT DEVELOPED SPECIAL EDUCATION
SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN**

QUESTION 1: What process was used to develop the delivery system for eligible individuals?

Purpose: The purpose of this question is to document that the district has met all the process requirements in the development of their District Developed Service Delivery Plan.

The delivery system was developed in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code rule 41.408(2)c. The group of individuals who developed the system included parents of eligible students, special education teachers, general education teachers, administrators, and at least one representative of the AEA.

The district will examine their SPP / APR data to determine priorities and develop an action plan if needed. If the district meets SPP / APR requirements, the delivery system will be considered effective. If the district does not meet requirements, the district will work in collaboration with the State and AEA.

Team members involved in the development of this plan include:

Parents of Eligible Individuals

- Public comment

Special Education Teachers

- Comment online (website)
- Special education coaches and department chairs

General Education Teachers

- Comment online (website)

Administrators

- Rozanne Warder
- Elementary Principals
- Secondary Principals
- Executive Council

Keystone AEA Personnel

- Pam Fields
- Anne Faber

The plan will be communicated to school staff (e.g., general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators) via email and will be made available to parents and community members via the district website.

QUESTION 2: How will service be organized and provided to eligible individuals?

Purpose: The purpose of this question is to describe how the district will provide special education instructional services.

The district will provide access to this continuum of services for all eligible individuals based on their IEP. Services may be provided within the district, or through contractual agreement with other districts and/or agencies, including, but not limited to, the Keystone Area Education Agency.

Students may receive different services at multiple points along the continuum of services based on the IEP.

The continuum includes services for eligible individuals ages 3-21.

Dubuque Community School District special education teachers will have a special education license issued by the State of Iowa.

Preschool Continuum of Services:

Students with Disabilities served in a Regular Early Childhood Program with Teacher Holding Dual Endorsements:

The child is served in a regular early childhood classroom with a state certified preschool teacher. The teacher holds endorsements for both early childhood and early childhood special education. The eligible child attends a **full day program** receiving specialized instruction on his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals throughout the school day. The AEA provides support services in speech, occupational therapy and/or physical therapy if the child is entitled to these services. Typically developing children also attend the program half-day either for the morning or afternoon session. The teacher is responsible for developing, monitoring and implementing the goals for each child with an IEP and also providing Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment for all children.

Structured Early Childhood Program with Teacher Holding Dual Endorsements:

The eligible child is served in a regular early childhood classroom with a state-certified preschool teacher. The teacher holds endorsements for both early childhood and early childhood special education. The child attends a **full day program** receiving specialized instruction on his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals throughout the school day. The AEA provides support services in speech, occupational therapy and/or physical therapy if the child is entitled to these services. Typically developing children attend for half-day only. The remainder of the day is designed for the direct teaching of a specialized program for the children who have IEP goals **most generally associated** with children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The teacher is responsible for developing, monitoring and implementing the goals for each child with an IEP and also providing Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment for all children.

Kindergarten through Age 21 Continuum of Services

Consulting Teacher Services: Consulting Teacher services are defined as indirect services provided by a certified special education teacher to a general education teacher in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying his/her instructional methods using specially designed instructional strategies, including physical modifications to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability receiving instruction in the general education classroom.

Co-Teaching Services: Co-teaching services are defined as the provision of specially designed instruction and academic instruction provided to a group of students with disabilities and nondisabled students. These services are provided by the special education teacher and general education teacher in partnership to meet the content and skills needs of students in the general education classroom. Best practices include a variety of models: one teach, one observe; station teaching; parallel teaching; alternative teaching; teaming; and one teach, one assist. In each model, teachers need to have the opportunity to co-plan.

Collaborative Services: Collaborative services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or to a group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher in a general education classroom to aid the student(s) in accessing the general education curriculum. These services are provided simultaneously with the general education content area instruction.

Special Education Support Services: Support services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or a group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher to provide supplementary instruction that cannot otherwise be provided during the student's regular instruction time. These services are provided in an individual or small group setting for a portion of the day. Support services supplement the instruction provided in the general education classroom. (Pull-out)

Special Class: Special Class services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or a group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher to provide instruction which is tied to the general education curriculum, but has been modified to meet the unique needs of the student(s) in a self-contained setting (including, but not limited to special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions). This means the student is receiving his or her primary instruction separate from non-disabled peers.

QUESTION 3: How will caseloads of special education teachers be determined and regularly monitored?

Purpose: This requirement exists to ensure that teacher caseloads do not become unmanageable in a manner that would compromise the provision of services prescribed in the IEPs.

Requirements: The description should include:

- What will be considered a full caseload (e.g., points, number of students)
- Who will monitor caseloads
- How often caseloads will be monitored

Caseloads/rosters in the elementary schools will be tentatively set in the spring for the following year. Caseloads in the secondary schools will be established by the end of August. Caseloads will be modified based on summer registration and actual fall enrollments. Caseloads will be reviewed at least twice during the school year by the special education teacher with his/her building principal or designee. Caseloads will be reviewed twice during the school year, at the end of October and at the end of February.

Regular early childhood and early childhood special education programs must meet the criteria for the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) regarding maximum class size and teacher-child ratios.

The QPPS standards do not give guidelines on the number of children with IEPs in a class. Dubuque Community School District recommends the following:

Early Childhood Special Education Structured Teaching - 6 entitled children
Regular Education Childhood Programs with Teacher Holding Dual Endorsements - 8 entitled children

In determining special education teacher caseloads for kindergarten through grade 12, the Dubuque Community School District will use the following to assign points to the programs of each eligible individual receiving an instructional program in the district.

Note: The assigned weighting of each child by the AEA shows the intensity of services provided to an individual student. Categories used for weighting are: curriculum modifications, specially designed instruction related to all goal areas regardless of the setting, support for school personnel and LRE efforts, and supplementary aids and services/specialized transportation.

1 point: The student is weighted a Level 1.

1.5 points: The student is weighted a Level 2.

2 points: The student is weighted a Level 3.

Multicategorical - Elementary and Middle School - 16 points; High School 18 points

Severe Autism - 12 points

Behavior - 16 points

Deaf and Hard of Hearing - 16 points

Life Skills - 16 points

Personal Learning Programs - 16 points

A teacher may be assigned a caseload with no more than the above total points. If a teacher's caseload exceeds this number for six weeks, the teacher and the building principal or designee will meet to discuss whether the teacher can provide the services and supports specified in his or her students' IEPs. If the teacher can provide services and supports to his or her students, no further action is needed. If the teacher cannot provide services and supports, a plan of action will be developed. If the teacher is not satisfied with the plan of action, the teacher may initiate the process for resolving caseload concerns that is described in this plan.

QUESTION 4: What procedures will a special education teacher use to resolve caseload concerns?

Purpose: The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that special education teachers have a way to request a review of situations that have not been addressed by the caseload review process.

Requirements: The caseload resolution procedures need to:

- Identify who the teacher needs to contact to initiate the process
- Identify the individual(s) who will consider the question and make a decision
- Provide a specific timeframe for completing the review and responding to the teacher's concern

Caseloads will be reviewed at least twice per year, the end of October and the end of February, by the special education teacher with his/her building principal or designee. In addition to scheduled reviews, caseload will also be reviewed under the following circumstances:

- If the caseload limit is or will be exceeded for a period of 6 weeks, then a review may be requested in writing
- If a teacher has a concern about how to meet the requirements of the IEPs, then a review may be requested in writing

REQUESTING A CASELOAD REVIEW

- All requests must be in writing.
- Requests should initially be given to an individual's principal or designee.
 - The person requesting the review is responsible for gathering relevant information to support their request.

STEPS TO RESOLVE CASELOAD CONCERNS:

1. Informal problem-solving strategies in relation to caseload concerns have been exhausted.
2. An initial written request for caseload review is submitted to the principal or designee.

This information might include, but is not limited to:

- IEPs
- Schedule and instructional groupings

- Collaborative/co-teaching assignments
 - Number of buildings
3. The request is reviewed for clarification with the principal/designee. The principal/designee tries to resolve the concern.
 4. If the concern is not resolved, the principal/designee and teacher contact the district director of special education to review the written documentation showing the concern.
 5. If the person requesting the review does not agree with the determination, he or she may appeal to the AEA director of special education.
 6. The AEA director/designee will meet with personnel involved and will provide a written opinion to the executive director of human resources, the district director of special education, building principal, and teacher.
 7. The executive director of human resources, the district director of special education, and building principal will review the AEA opinion and determine the final decision. This decision will be given to the teacher in a written letter.

QUESTION 5: How will the delivery system for eligible individuals meet the targets identified in the state’s performance plan and the LEA determination as assigned by the state? What process will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery system for eligible individuals?

Purpose: Dependent upon any needs indicated by data or determination assigned by the State, the district will examine the District Developed Plan to determine if a revision to the plan is warranted in order to affect the desired change.

The Dubuque Community School District goal is to evaluate the effectiveness of the special education delivery system and determine if it is leading to improved outcomes for eligible individuals and will do so in the following manner:

1. Each special education teacher and AEA consultant staff will meet face to face for the purpose of reviewing student progress. These monthly meetings will include a review of IEP data, student grades and, when appropriate, district-wide assessments. The findings of these monthly meetings will be documented on an AEA-developed data sheet and include implementation strategies or IEP decisions based on the review and provided to the school principal.
2. At the completion of the first semester and by May 1 the department chairs and elementary coaches will summarize the special education data for the school by grade level. This information will be documented on an AEA-designed template and will be provided in total to the school principal, district director of special education and the AEA sector coordinator.
3. Annually the director of special education and AEA sector coordinator will synthesize the information for the current school year into a district report of the data.

The delivery system was developed in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code rule 41.408(2)"c". The group of individuals who developed the system included parents of eligible individuals, special education teachers, general education teachers, administrators, and at least one representative of the AEA.

Date of Board Action

May 11, 2015 Approved by the Board of Education