

Earlham Community School District

Special Education Instructional Services Delivery System

Revised -- July 2019

The mission of the Earlham Community School District is to empower innovative, adaptive and resourceful learners.

The vision of the Earlham Community School District is to provide all learners with skills and diverse educational opportunities to engage all learners in relevant, real-world experiences and to develop learners' confidence, character, and perseverance so that they will positively impact their world.

It is the philosophy of the Earlham School District to make available a full spectrum of special education services as appropriate at the early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school levels. This program provides a free and appropriate public education to individuals who require special education. The least restrictive environment that is most appropriate for the student will be utilized.

Approved by Earlham Community School District Board of Education August 2019

Terms and Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the Special Education Instructional Services Delivery System.

Accommodation - Additional support in the classroom to better serve a student's needs.

Behavior Intervention Plan - Information collected during a Functional Behavioral Assessment is used to develop a concrete plan of action for managing a student's behavior.

Case Load- The number of students on a roster being served by an individual special education teacher.

Discrepancy- A significant difference (set by Iowa's Education Department Standards) when comparing target student data to peer comparison samples, a local or national standard, benchmark.

Documentation - Documents or evidence for monitoring and recording student information.

Functional Behavior Assessment - A problem-solving process for addressing student problem behavior using a variety of techniques and strategies to identify the function of specific behavior and to help IEP teams select interventions to directly address the problem behavior.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) – A student's individual plan outlining the services they are entitled to and are receiving through the special education program

Intervention- Providing 1:1 or small group assistance to a student in a specific skill area that other students in the general education class are not receiving in order to advance progress.

Medicaid Reimbursement Documentation - The process by which staff submits documentation of health and behavior services of eligible students for district reimbursement.

Modification – An adjustment or alteration of curriculum to better meet the student's needs.

Paraeducator – An adult staff member assigned to work with a particular student(s) or class in addition to the general education teacher or special education teacher.

Skill Deficit - A specific skill that a student has not acquired, which may impair their ability to participate in the general education curriculum.

Tuition Out-To send a student to another school district or educational facility to receive entitled services that the resident school district does not offer.

Part 1: Organization and Delivery of Services

Process Used to Develop System

The Earlham Community School District is comprised of one Preschool-12 facility housing all grade levels. On a regular basis, the district will review the district developed delivery system. The most recent update of the delivery system for special education was done in 2013, but changes in student population, student needs, and staff changes have precipitated a review in preparation of the 2019-20 school year.

The Development Group - The development/review group has consisted of the following members:

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|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| John Sneller | High School Special Education Teacher |
| Janet Grush | Middle School Special Education Teacher |
| Jeni Flickinger | Elementary Special Education Teacher |
| Paige Risetter | Elementary Special Education Teacher |
| Tara Aquino | Early Childhood Special Education Teacher |
| Kirk Gilson | High School Regular Education Teacher |
| Maddie Beeler | Middle School Regular Education Teacher |
| Kevin Williamson | Elementary Regular Education Teacher |
| Jo Henke | Parent of Elementary Special Education Student |
| Steph Spurling | Parent of a Middle School Special Education Student |
| Denise Bean | Parent of a High School Special Education Student |
| Julia Thompson | AEA Special Education Consultant |
| Tinna Walberg | AEA Regional Director |
| Jason Hammen | Elementary Principal, Director of Special Education |
| Michael Wright | Superintendent |

Special Education Continuum of Services

The continuum **includes** services for eligible individuals ages 3-21. The district will provide access to this continuum for all eligible individuals based on their IEP. Services may be provided within the district, or through contractual agreements with other districts and/or agencies. Students may receive different services at multiple points along the continuum based on IEP.

Early Childhood Special Education: The Earlham Community School District provides special education services for children 3 to 5 years of age with special needs as well as Preschool children with special needs. Services may be provided by Heartland AEA or in conjunction with community-based services. The Earlham Community School District Preschool program curriculum is based upon the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS).

The Preschool classroom is a general education classroom for four year old students with a full-time teacher and full-time Paraeducator. The Preschool class will have special education students. Additional staffing for the Preschool classroom will be based on the Earlham Special Education Caseload Determination system described in this document.

Regular Preschool Program and Early Childhood Special Education Staff

Licensure:

- Pre-Kindergarten and Early Childhood Special Education

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Classroom instruction and implementation of adaptations and accommodations as specified in the IEP
- Monitor the implementation of services described in each IEP and monitor student progress relative to goals in the IEP

Student Population:

- Less than 50% of children with disabilities
- Teacher /Student ratio will be not more than 1:10

General Education with consultation/accommodations. The student is served in the general education classroom with consultation and support from the special education teacher. The general education teacher is responsible for direct instruction, testing, grading and behavioral management as specified in the IEP. The special education teacher support may include assisting the general education teacher with the design and preparation of materials, adaptations and accommodations. The special education teacher is responsible for monitoring the student's progress on IEP goals.

General Education with direct special education support in the general education classroom. The student receives special education support for the general education curriculum in the general education setting. The special education teacher, support service provider, or trained paraprofessional will be in the general education classroom to provide direct instruction, instructional support, or other assistance to the student or a group of students, through models such as collaborative or co-teaching. The special education teacher/service provider is responsible for monitoring the student's progress on IEP goals.

General Education with direct special education support outside the general education classroom. The student receives special education support for the general education curriculum outside the general education setting. When the services cannot be appropriately provided in the general education setting, the student may receive selected services or all services he/she needs in a separate educational setting including, but not limited to: smaller class size with individualized instruction, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The special education teacher/service provider is responsible for monitoring the student's progress on IEP goals. Reverse Consultation will be used when secondary special education teachers are serving students an academic area for which they are not certified.

Alternative Site Services In some cases programs may be required at an alternative location. Alternative site services are programs that:

- Meet the needs of students which cannot be met within the local school setting.
- May be provided by tuition-out or local alternative services.
- May be provided by community based services.

Part 2: Special Education Teacher Caseload Determination

Caseloads will be tentatively set in the spring for the following year. Caseloads may be modified based on summer registration and actual fall enrollments. Caseloads could be reviewed at least twice during the school year by individual district special education teachers with their building principal. In determining teacher caseloads, the District will use the following values to assign points to the programs of each eligible individual receiving an instructional program in the district.

Students will be assigned a point value in each of these categories. The total points will then be divided by the 7 categories to get an average value for each student. The total average points for each student will be added together to determine caseload for each special education teacher.

It is recommended that a teacher's caseload point total fall within the range of 15-21 total points but not to exceed 18 total students. This caseload limit may be exceeded by no more than 10% for a period of no more than six weeks, if doing so does not prevent the affected teacher's ability to provide the services and supports specified in his or her students' IEP.

Para-educators who serve special education students in the special education setting will be determined in the spring of the year for the following year based on the student needs and the special education teacher caseload. The [matrix for calculation](#) for calculations is linked to this document.

Curriculum

Zero Points: Student is functioning in the general education curriculum at a level similar to peers.

One Point: Student requires limited modifications to the general curriculum.

Two Points: Student requires significant modifications to the general curriculum. May require specialized instruction and modified classroom assessment.

Three Points: Significant adaptations to grade level curriculum requires specialized instructional strategies. Alternative Assessment may be used to measure progress for District Wide Assessment.

IEP Goals

Zero Points: Student has IEP goals instructed by another teacher or service provider.

One Point: Student has 1-2 IEP goals.

Two Points: Students has 3 IEP goals.

Three Points: Student has 4 or more IEP goals.

Specially Designed Instruction

Zero Points: Student requires no specially designed instruction regardless of setting.

One Point: 55% or less of the student's day is receiving specially designed instruction.

Two Points: 56-85% or less of the student's day is receiving specially designed instruction.

Three Points: 86-100% or less of the student's day is receiving specially designed instruction.

Joint Planning and Consultation

Zero Points: Joint planning typical to that provided for all students.

One Point: Special education teachers conduct joint planning with 1 general education teacher or paraeducators over the course of each month or less than 60 minutes per month.

Two Points: Special education teachers conduct joint planning with 2 to 3 general education teachers or paraeducators over the course of each month or 60-120 minutes per month.

Three Points: Special education teachers conduct joint planning with more than 3 general education teachers or paraeducators over the course of each month or more than 120 minutes per month.

Paraeducator Support -The determination of the need for Paraeducator support for a student will be the determination of the IEP Team in accordance with the student needs.

Zero Points: Individual support needed similar to peers.

One Point: Additional individual support from an adult is needed for 55% or less of the school day.

Two Points: Additional individual support from an adult is needed for 56% to 85% of the school day.

Three Points: Additional individual support from an adult is needed from 86% to 100% of the school day.

Assistive Technology

Zero Points: Assistive technology use is similar to peers.

One Point: Assistive technology requires limited teacher-provided individualization and/or training for the student

Two Points: Assistive technology requires extensive teacher-provided individualization and/or training for the student.

Three Points: Assistive technology requires extensive teacher-provided individualization and/or training for the student. Significant maintenance and/or upgrades for continued effective use are anticipated.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

Zero Points: Behavior is not a concern.

One Point: Behavior is a concern and there are accommodations listed in the IEP, but there are no goals.

Two Points: Behavior is a concern and the student has one behavior goal.

Three Points: Behavior is a concern and the student has two or more behavior goals.

Note: Special consideration will be given in case load determination if additional communication with parents is required on a monthly, weekly or daily basis.

Part 3: Procedures for Resolving Concerns About Caseload

Caseloads may be reviewed at least twice per year by individual LEA special education teachers with their building principal. In addition to scheduled reviews, caseload will also be reviewed when the special education teacher or parent requests a review or when a specified caseload is exceeded.

Requesting a Caseload Review:

1. A written statement of the concerns needs to be turned in to the building principal.
2. The principal will notify the review team of the request to review the current caseload for the special education teacher.
3. The review team includes an administrator, a special education teacher (in addition to the requesting teacher), and a general education teacher. An Area Education Agency representative will be invited, but not required to be a part of the team.
4. An administrator other than the building principal will facilitate the team and the process.
5. Caseload reviews will be held and recommendations made within 10 working days of such review request.

When reviewing a caseload the requesting teacher is responsible for gathering relevant information to support their request. This information might include, but is not limited to the following:

1. the special education teacher's current number of students
2. individual needs of the students
3. amount of planning time needed for collaboration
4. amount of preparation and planning time
5. number of paraeducators available
6. AEA support
7. time and scheduling
8. ability to provide the services identified in the student's IEP
9. Co-teaching assignments

Procedural Steps

1. Informal problem solving strategies in relation to caseload concerns have been exhausted.
2. A written request for caseload review is submitted to the appropriate building principal,
3. The request is reviewed for clarification with the building principal. The principal tries to resolve the concern at this point.
4. If the caseload concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the request is then sent to the caseload review team.
5. Within 10 working days, the caseload review team will review the request and give a recommendation to the appropriate building principal.
6. Upon receipt of the review team's recommendation, the principal will review the information and discuss it with the individual special education teacher. Within 10 working days, the principal will meet with the individual and provide a written determination.
7. If the person requesting the review does not agree with the determination, he or she may appeal to the superintendent.
8. The superintendent will meet with the personnel involved and will provide a written decision.

When reviewing a caseload the following suggestions may be made to ease caseload burden, but suggestions are not limited to the following:

1. redistribution of student assignments to other special education teachers in the building
2. hiring of additional para-educators
3. hiring of additional special education teachers
4. a signed agreement that the current situation is feasible

Part 4: District-Wide Evaluation of the System

The Earlham Community School District will examine their State Performance Plan data and Annual Progress Report data to determine priorities and develop an action plan. If the district meets progress requirements, the delivery system will be considered effective. If the district does not meet the requirements of the State Performance Plan and Annual Progress Report, the district will develop a plan in collaboration with the State and AEA. The Director of Special Education will monitor the committee members and rotation.

Addendum 1: Organization and Delivery of Services

System Structure

Each building will have a Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) team in place for the purpose of addressing concerns about student academic progress or behavior. This team is made up of general education teachers and special education teachers, and may also include special area teachers such as Art, PE, Music and administrators.

When the MTSS Team is called upon to assess a student's academic progress or behavior and assist a student's progress, several different steps will be taken. Parents are invited to participate throughout all of the steps. The steps are as follows:

1. Prior to referral to the MTSS Team, communication must occur between teachers and parents addressing any and all concerns. Interventions with documentation may begin at this step.
2. Communication with other resources through the MTSS Teams. Intervention with documentation **MUST** be implemented in step 2. C
3. Communication with an extended problem solving team. This includes but may not be limited to Heartland Area Education Agency staff. Interventions with documentation are reviewed, revised and continued. The MTSS team will review interventions and data and consider the following items: the student's rate of progress, discrepancy from peers, and specific educational needs. If interventions are successful students may or may not proceed to the following step. This will be handled on a case by case basis.
4. Consideration for entitlement to a special education program. These services are outlined in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Special education services are considered when a student's needs require resources beyond that of their general education program. Once again rate of progress, discrepancy from peers, and educational needs will be considered. These considerations are based on a student's skill deficits, or when it has been determined that a student's needs cannot be met within their general education program. These considerations are based on comprehensive evaluations and documented data from the interventions in steps 1-3.
5. Students entitled to special education services will:
 - a. Receive services as specified on their IEP.
 - b. Receive service through both general education and special education through collaboration between the general and special education teachers.
 - c. Be placed in the least restrictive environment possible based upon their individual needs.