

Maquoketa Community School District Special Education Service Delivery Plan FINAL DRAFT – MAY 15, 2009 For Public Review and Comment

The Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education require each school district to develop a plan for the delivery of special education services. Districts must make the plan available for public comment. If you have comments that you wish to be considered before this plan is finalized, please submit those comments to:

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Comments must be received by June 8, 2009.

The delivery system was developed in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code rule 41.408(2)"c". The committee was approved at the April 14, 2009 board meeting.

Members of the Maquoketa Community School District committee were:

Parents:, Deb Kyarsgaard, Johanna Sutton, Susan Walsh, and Don Wentworth.

Teachers: Kathy McCaulley, secondary special education teacher, Mindy Orris, secondary general education teacher, Sue Hass, middle level special education teacher, Kate Cavanagh, middle level general education teacher, Mandy Thiel, elementary special education teacher, Sheri Bickford, elementary general education teacher, Teri Johannsen, elementary special education teacher, Kathy Miller, primary level general education teacher.

Administrators: Mark Vervaecke, High School; Autumn Pino, Middle School; Pat Bollman, Briggs Elementary; Joan Bollman, Cardinal Elementary; Kim Huckstadt, superintendent; Helen Snell, Curriculum Director.

Area Education Agency Representative: Ardie Miller, School Social Worker.

District Developed Plans- Content Requirements

Overview The content requirements of the District Developed Plans will be met through a set of five questions and a series of assurances.

Examples and suggested text are included to help districts when they are developing their plan.

- Questions**
1. What process was used to develop the special education delivery system for eligible individuals?
 2. How will services be organized and provided to eligible individuals?
 3. How will caseloads of special education teachers be determined and regularly monitored?
 4. What procedures will a special education teacher use to resolve caseload concerns?
 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?
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Assurances A set of six assurances must be included in the District Developed Service Delivery Plan.

See assurances on page 3.

District Developed Special Education Service Delivery Plan Assurances

- The district assures it provides a system for delivering instructional services including a full continuum of services and placements to address the needs of eligible individuals aged 3 to 21, and shall provide for the following:
 - (1) The provision of accommodations and modifications to the general education environment and program, including settings and programs in which eligible individuals aged 3 through 5 receive specially designed instruction, including modification and adaptation of curriculum, instructional techniques and strategies and instructional materials.
 - (2) The provision of specially designed instruction and related activities through cooperative efforts of the special education teachers and general education teachers in the general education classroom.
 - (3) The provision of specially designed instruction on a limited basis by a special education teacher in the general classroom or in an environment other than the general classroom, including consultation with general education teachers.
 - (4) The provision of specially designed instruction to eligible individuals with similar special education instructional needs organized according to the type of curriculum and instruction to be provided, and the severity of the educational needs of the eligible individuals served.
- The district assures the school board has approved the development of the plan for creating a system for delivering specially designed instructional services.
- The district assures that prior to the school board adoption, this delivery system was available for comment by the general public.
- The district assures the delivery system plan was developed by a committee that included parents of eligible individuals, special education teachers, general education teachers, administrators, and at least one AEA representative (selected by the AEA Special Education Director).
- The district assures the AEA Special Education Director verified the delivery system is in compliance with the Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education.
- The district assures the school board has approved the service delivery plan for implementation.

The following pages (4-10) address the process used to determine special education eligibility that is reflective of our proposed Maquoketa Services Delivery Plan.

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

Solution Focused Intervention Process

The Solution-Focused model concentrates on children's learning and achievement and social and emotional needs, and accommodations are implemented that students may require to enhance their educational experience. For well over a decade special education, in cooperation with general education, worked diligently toward early intervention and prevention in hopes of maintaining children in their natural environment. The Solution-Focused model allows us to perhaps do better.

The Mississippi Bend AEA wrote a plan called The Solution Focused Intervention Plan which has been enthusiastically approved by the Iowa Department of Education. Tenants of this process have been taken from the principles embedded in Solution Focused Brief Therapy.

More than simply techniques, Solution Focused Brief Therapy is a way of thinking about problems, solutions and people's intrinsic strengths and resources. This model moves away from a deficit to a competency model which generates positive proactive change. It helps students and educational professionals identify their own strengths and resources and utilize them toward achieving their relevant goals. This non-blaming way of thinking shifts the focus away from what is wrong in people to what is strong in people and their competence rather than their deficits. There is less focus on "problems" and more focus on empowerment, strengths and exceptions to those problems in order to promote solutions. Rather than dwelling on the past and engaging in lengthy "problem talk" about mistakes, weaknesses and causes, the focus is on what worked before and what our customers want, what their goals are and which solutions can help them achieve those goals.

The most salient features of the Solution Focused Intervention Process are highlighted below:

- early intervention for all students who are having difficulty
- support services provided to general education students without concern for whether they have a disability
- assessment done to help develop and evaluate appropriate interventions, not to label and place in special education
- teachers and parents encouraged, even more, to help develop interventions and assistance students who are eligible for and need special education may not require a label to receive services
- The Solution Focused Intervention Process assumes that all students should be educated in the least restrictive environment. Whenever a student is identified as needing assistance, all initial efforts are geared toward designing interventions to help the student be successful in general education.

Intervention recommendations should be linked to assessment information that is generated by student specific questions. Only after general education-based interventions have been exhausted is special education considered as a possible intervention.

Our Solution Focused Intervention Process attempts to resolve concerns in general education prior to considering a full and individual evaluation of a student's need for special education. One of the shifts that occurs when moving from previous models to a solution focused model is when teachers indicate a desire for assistance. In a solution-focused approach teachers will be encouraged to utilize help of support staff earlier in the process.

There are four levels of service in this delivery system. A brief description of levels A through D follows.

Level A - Initial Intervention:

When concern is expressed about a student's performance (academic, behavioral, social/emotional, physiological, sensory, etc.), the concern is addressed initially through communication and collaboration with parents and teachers. Mississippi Bend AEA support staff are not involved at this level.

Level B - Collaborative Intervention:

If the student does not attain the performance goals set by the parent and teacher, the teacher who has a concern may then request consultation and assistance from the building's Teacher Assistance Team (TAT), Mississippi Bend AEA support staff, and/or other community resources. At this level Mississippi Bend AEA support staff will not provide direct services to the students. In cases where the severity and need are at such an intense level that there is little question regarding the need for special education services, the team may choose to go directly to Level D.

Level C - Collaborative Intervention which may involve Mississippi Bend AEA:

If the second level of assistance is not sufficient to meet the needs of the student or if additional resources are needed to clarify the concern, written permission is obtained from the parent through a Support Service Intervention Consent form. If previous screening of hearing, vision, and health have not previously occurred, they will be initiated at this level to examine their potential relationship to the presenting concerns.

At this level, Mississippi Bend AEA support staff are included as part of solution focused activities such as assessment, instruction, counseling, and progress monitoring. The intent of assessment at this level is to use the latter for intervention plans within special education including systematic changes designed to assist the student in attaining performance goals. **The plan allows for a special education teacher to provide direct instruction or support of up to one block per day for a 45 day period. Parent consent is obtained along with the development of a Solution Focus Intervention Plan. A review date is set to reconvene and discuss whether or not interventions worked or that more intensive services may be needed.**

Assessments are tailored to answer student-specific questions.

Level D - Full and Individual Evaluations:

When little or no improvement in the student's performance results from the previous interventions attempted within the general education setting or when the resources that are necessary to maintain the solution focused intervention exceed the capacity of the general education setting, the need for special education services will be considered. Written parental consent is obtained through the Consent for Full and Individual Evaluation form to initiate this process.

An objective definition of the presenting problem(s) must be stated in terms that are as specific, measurable, and data-based as possible. These descriptions must be designed to assist in quantifying the severity of the concern in comparison to peers and environmental expectations and suggest target goals for which intervention strategies will be developed. The student's strengths or areas of competence relevant to the presenting problem(s) also must be identified. Any necessary additional assessments are driven by student-specific questions and previous intervention outcomes.

Students, parents, special education staff, and Mississippi Bend AEA support staff will be increasingly involved in designing student interventions carried out in general education, the home, and the community. The previous dichotomy of special and general education should become more blurred as all educational services are increasingly blended to assist students in the Least Restricted Environment (LRE) possible.

Addendum District Developed Plans: Early Childhood Special Education Content Requirements

Overview The content requirements of the District Developed Service Delivery Plans (February 2009) will be met through a set of five questions and a series of assurances. As a part of the District Developed Service Delivery Plans, districts must describe how Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) instructional services are provided to meet the needs of eligible individuals.

This Addendum provides information for Question #2 and Question #3 addressing ECSE in the District Developed Service Delivery Plan.

Addressing Question #2 Question #2 addresses how districts include the full continuum of services and placements for eligible individuals, including preschool.

The question asks: *How will services be organized and provided to eligible individuals?*

When describing services for preschool children, the district must adhere to federal data reporting definitions of settings for preschool.

Definitions The definitions for “general education” and “special class”, as used in school age, do not accurately define the classroom or service required for preschool children.

In the District Developed Service Delivery Plan, the district must adhere to the following terms and definitions to describe instructional services and placements for preschool children:

- Regular Early Childhood Program – Less than 50 percent children with disabilities; and
 - Early Childhood Special Education Program – More than 50 percent children with disabilities.
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Continued on next page

Addendum District Developed Plans: Early Childhood Special Education Content Requirements, Continued

Examples for Continuum of Services

The examples provided in the District Developed Service Delivery Plan document for “Continuum of Services” are applicable for preschool children by substituting “Regular Early Childhood Program” for “general education” and “Early Childhood Special Education Program” for “special class.”

The following additional example describes instructional service provided in a regular early childhood program in which the general education teacher is appropriately licensed to teach preschool children receiving special education services.

Regular Early Childhood Program with Teacher holding Dual Endorsements (i.e. Ed 100). The child is served in the regular early childhood classroom with a teacher who holds a valid practitioner's license issued by the Board of Educational Examiners that includes prekindergarten and early childhood special education. The teacher is responsible for direct instruction, preparation of materials, adaptations and accommodations as specified in the IEP. The teacher with the dual endorsement is responsible for implementing and monitoring the child’s progress according to the IEP.

General and Special Education Teachers for Preschool Children

General Education: The regular early childhood program is taught by a general education teacher who holds a valid practitioner's license and holds an endorsement that includes prekindergarten.

Endorsements for Early Childhood Education are:

100 Teacher – Prekindergarten through grade three, including special education;

103 Teacher – Prekindergarten through kindergarten; and

106 Teacher – Prekindergarten through grade three.

ECSE: The early childhood special education program, as well as the consultation and support in the regular early childhood program, must be provided by an ECSE teacher who holds a valid practitioner’s license and holds an endorsement that includes ECSE. The ECSE teacher is responsible for monitoring the child’s progress on IEP goals.

Endorsements for Early Childhood Special Education are:

100 Teacher – Prekindergarten through grade three, including special education;

223 Teacher – Prekindergarten through kindergarten, early childhood spec. ed.

Addendum District Developed Plans: Early Childhood Special Education Content Requirements, Continued

**Providing
Access to the
Continuum of
Services**

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 agreement with other districts and/or agencies (i.e. early childhood programs in community).

Districts that are providing instructional services through a contractual agreement with other districts and/or other agencies will need to examine the preschool services annually to determine the availability of regular early childhood programs within the district.

**Preschool
Program
Standards
Requirement**

Early childhood special education and regular early childhood programs providing instructional services to children on an IEP must implement Preschool Program Standards as defined by the Iowa Department of Education. In the District Developed Service Delivery Plan, a district must address how instructional services are provided in placements that meet Preschool Program Standards.

**Preschool
Program
Standards**

The DE has defined the Preschool Program Standards as the following:

- 1.) Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS);
 - 2.) Head Start Program Performance Standards; or
 - 3.) National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation.
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**Addressing
Question #3**

Question #3 addresses teacher caseloads.
The question asks: *How will caseloads of special education teachers be determined and regularly monitored?*

The full continuum of placements providing instructional services to eligible preschool children must implement one of the three Preschool Program Standards as defined by the Iowa Department of Education. Therefore, when addressing Question 3; a district's regular early childhood program and early childhood special education programs must meet the criteria of the Preschool Program Standard being implemented regarding maximum class size and teacher-child ratios.

Question 2: What was the process used to develop the delivery system for eligible individuals?

Continuum of Services for Eligible Students

General education with consultation. The student is served in the general education classroom without any accommodations or modifications to the curriculum, instruction, testing or grading. The service provider is responsible for consulting with general education teacher and monitoring the student's progress according to the IEP.

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, in collaboration with the general 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 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.

Notes:

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

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 agreement with other districts and/or agencies.

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

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 will be reviewed at least twice during the school year by individual district special education teachers with their building principal and/or special education coordinator.

In determining special education teacher caseloads, the Maquoketa Community School District will use the following values to assign points to the programs of each eligible individual receiving an instructional program in the district.

A teacher may be assigned a caseload with no more than 50 total points.

One point: The student receives specially designed instruction/supports for less than 5 hours per week.

Two points: The student receives specially designed instruction/supports for between 5 and 12.5 hours per week.

Three points: The student receives specially designed instruction/supports for between 12.5 and 24 hours per week.

Four points: The student receives specially designed instruction/supports for more than 24 hours per week.

Note: Supports could include travel time to students served off-site (e.g., hospitalized or homebound students, preschoolers served in their general education preschool classes). If multiple students are served in one site, travel time is applied to one of the students, only.

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

Resolving Caseload Concerns

On-going communication between special education teachers and building administrators will take place throughout the school year.

Caseloads will be reviewed at least twice per year (**September 15 & May 15**) by individual LEA special education teachers with their building principal and/or special education coordinator. In addition to scheduled reviews, caseload will also be reviewed under the following circumstances:

- **When a teacher has a concern about his or her ability to effectively perform the essential functions of his or her job due to caseload.**
- **When a teacher's caseload has exceeded the acceptable point range (between 40-50) as determined by the MCSD.**
- **The above criteria do not preclude situations that warrant review.**

REQUESTING A CASELOAD REVIEW

- All requests must be in writing
- Requests should initially be given to an individual's principal/supervisor
- **If a formal review is requested**, the person requesting the review is responsible for gathering relevant information to support their request. This information might include, but is not limited to:
 - IEPs
 - Schedule and instructional groupings
 - Collaborative/co-teaching assignments
 - Number of buildings
- **A meeting will be held between the building administrator and the teacher**

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 principal/supervisor.
3. The request is reviewed for clarification with the principal/supervisor. The principal/supervisor tries to resolve the concern at this point.
4. If the caseload concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the request is then sent to the **district superintendent**.
5. Within 15 working days, the **superintendent** will review the request and give a recommendation to the individual's principal/supervisor.
6. Upon receipt of the **superintendent's** recommendation, the principal will review the information and discuss it with the individual.
7. Within 10 working days, the principal will meet with the individual and provide a written determination.

8. If the person requesting the review does not agree with the determination, he or she may appeal to the AEA Director of Special Education.
9. The AEA Director/designee will meet with personnel involved and will provide a written decision.

Process 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.

Process Evaluation “The district will examine their SPP/APR data to determine priorities and develop an action plan. 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.”

Appendix A

Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education **281—41.408(256B,273,34CFR300) Instructional services.**

41.408(1) *General.* Instructional services are the specially designed instruction and accommodations provided by special education instructional personnel to eligible individuals. These services are ordinarily provided by the LEA but, in limited circumstances, may be provided by another LEA, the AEA or another recognized agency through contractual agreement. An agency must use the procedure and criteria described in subrule 41.408(2) for creating a delivery system for instructional services.

41.408(2) *Delivery system.* An agency shall use the following development process for creating a system for delivering instructional services.

- a. The delivery system shall meet this chapter's requirements relating to a continuum of services and placements, shall address the needs of eligible individuals aged 3 to 21, and shall provide for the following:
 - (1) The provision of accommodations and modifications to the general education environment and program, including settings and programs in which eligible individuals aged 3 through 5 receive specially designed instruction, including modification and adaptation of curriculum, instructional techniques and strategies, and instructional materials.
 - (2) The provision of specially designed instruction and related activities through cooperative efforts of special education teachers and general education teachers in the general education classroom.
 - (3) The provision of specially designed instruction on a limited basis by a special education teacher in the general classroom or in an environment other than the general classroom, including consultation with general education teachers.
 - (4) The provision of specially designed instruction to eligible individuals with similar special education instructional needs organized according to the type of curriculum and instruction to be provided, and the severity of the educational needs of the eligible individuals served.
- b. The delivery system shall be described in writing and shall include the following components:
 - (1) A description of how services will be organized and how services will be provided to eligible individuals consistent with the requirements of this chapter, and the provisions described in 41.408(2) "a."
 - (2) A description of how the caseloads of special education teachers will be determined and regularly monitored to ensure that the IEPs of eligible individuals are able to be fully implemented.
 - (3) A description of the procedures a special education teacher can use to resolve

- concerns about caseload. The procedures shall specify timelines for the resolution of a concern and identify the person to whom a teacher reports a concern. The procedures shall also identify the person or persons who are responsible for reviewing a concern and rendering a decision, including the specification of any corrective actions.
- (4) A description of the process used to develop the system, including the composition of the group responsible for its development.
 - (5) A description of the process that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the system.
 - (6) A description of how the delivery system will meet the targets identified in the state's performance plan, described in this chapter.
 - (7) A description of how the delivery system will address needs identified by the state in any determination made under this chapter.
- c.* The following procedures shall be followed by the agency:
- (1) Before initiating the development of the delivery system, the LEA board shall approve such action and the LEA personnel and parents who will participate in the development of the alternative.
 - (2) The delivery system shall be developed by a group of individuals that includes parents of eligible individuals, special education and general education teachers, administrators, and at least one AEA representative. The AEA representative shall be selected by the director.
 - (3) The director shall verify that the delivery system is in compliance with these rules prior to LEA board adoption.
 - (4) Prior to presenting the delivery system to the LEA board for adoption, the group responsible for its development shall provide an opportunity for comment on the system by the general public. In presenting the delivery system to the LEA board for adoption, the group shall describe the comment received from the general public and how the comment was considered.
 - (5) The LEA board shall approve the system prior to implementation.
- d.* The procedure presented in subrule 41.907(9) shall be followed in applying the weighting plan for special education instructional funds described in Iowa Code section 256B.9 to any delivery system developed under these provisions.
- e.* An LEA shall review, revise, and readopt its delivery system using the procedures identified in paragraph “*c*” of this subrule at least every five years, or sooner if required by the state in conjunction with any determination made under this chapter.
- f.* An LEA shall make the document describing its delivery system readily available to LEA personnel and members of the public.
- g.* A director may grant an adjusted caseload status for good cause shown, if an LEA submits a request to the AEA for such status because class size, including the size of a class served by a teacher employed less than full-time, exceeds those limits specified in the portion of the plan required by 41.408(2) “*b*”(2).

