

WORKLOAD PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION EDUCATORS

1. REGULATION

The Illinois special education regulations (23 Illinois Administrative Code 226.735) state that all school districts are required to adopt a work load plan for special educators effective for the 2009-2010-school year, or as soon as possible after that date, if a later date is necessary due to compliance with any labor agreement in effect at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year.

2. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to make recommendations regarding the examination of special education workload in the provision of services to students with IEPs and section 504 Plans in IPSD 204. The recommendations are intended to provide a conceptual framework for administration, certified and licensed special education staff members, and representatives from the bargaining unit to use in examining all areas impacting a special educator's work load.

Components of the Plan include:

Description of the difference between workload and caseload.

Description of the five major activity categories and components which are part of the typical special education workload.

1. Individualized and Specialized Instruction
 2. Consultation, Collaboration, and Problem Solving
 3. Attendance at IEP meetings, other meetings and staff conferences
 4. Paperwork and Reporting, including Data Collection and Analysis
 5. Crisis Management: Social Emotional, Medical, and Behavioral
- Description of the procedure to request a workload review, and the various levels a review may entail.
 - Description of types of data that might be useful to collect for an analysis of workload.
 - User-friendly form to assist with guiding the review process.

3. PLAN PREPARATION

This work load plan is not part of the teacher collective bargaining Agreement, but teachers do have a right under the Agreement to initiate a request for a workload review. Flexibility and fluidity are key concepts in providing a free appropriate education to students whose education is articulated within an IEP.

The IPSD 204 workload plan was developed by the District in cooperation with the Indian Prairie Education Association by means of a committee which included the following:

Katie Popp, Association President

Christina Sepiol, Asst. Superintendent

Linda Herwaldt, Coordinator of Health Services

Bobbie Johnson, PT

Julie Polsky, OT

MaryKate Grecu, Association Member

Susan Farnan, Association Member

Kim Pehlke, Association Member

Betsy Schrubbe, Association Member

Lisa Schneider, Association Member

Olivia Mayszak, Association Member

Rachel Witkowski, Association Member

Karen Supel, Association Member

Gina Bogin, Association Member

Lisa Snow, Association Member.

4. WORKLOAD VS. CASELOAD

This plan addresses the issue of work load versus the traditional case load concept. The plan provides a model for examining the workload of special education educators in Indian Prairie School District. This model is intended as a framework, not to dictate numbers, but to adapt to the changing tasks, responsibilities, and requirements of Indian Prairie's special education educators. Through careful analysis of the various responsibilities required in the plan, the District will be better able to respond proactively to the challenges of planning for and providing services to the District's students with Disabilities.

Workload is not case load. In case load, the reference is to the number of students with IEPs for whom the special education educators are responsible. Each student is counted as "one" no matter what the students' needs are or the severity of the students' disabilities. Work load refers to all of the responsibilities required of special education educators and is based upon the intensity of the students' needs. The four activities of workload considered by this plan are: 1) individualized and specialized instruction, 2) consultation, collaboration and problem solving, 3) attendance at IEP meetings, and 4) paperwork and reporting. The nine educationally related factors also considered are: 1) access to quality professional development to increase the special educators' skills in state-of-the-art and research-based instruction and problem solving, 2) access to quality instructional materials designed to enhance and extend the instructional experience, 3) access to adequate classroom instructional space, 4) access to equipment and technology support, 5) access to mentoring opportunities, 6) access to supervisory support and assistance, 7) utilization of paraprofessionals and other support service personnel, 8) work with parents and outside providers, and 9) state class size requirements and professional organization recommendations.

5. WORKLOAD REVIEW

The workload of special education educators is based upon an analysis of the activities for which Indian Prairie's special education personnel are responsible, as delineated in the plan and in terms of the activities and educationally related factors noted in Section 4. The workload plan also recognizes that the nature and the amount of work should be considered when reviewing the workload responsibilities of special education educators. If a request for review is made and it is determined that adjustments in staffing, work load, or other accommodations are to be recommended, such recommendations shall be communicated for consideration by district administration. The four activities are defined as follows:

INDIVIDUALIZED AND SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION

Individualized instruction is specially designed so that it meets the unique needs of the student that result from the student's disability and ensures access to the general education curriculum as much as appropriate for the educational benefit of the student. The individualized instruction is delineated on the student's IEP, and the amount of this instruction varies based upon the student's disability severity.

Specialized instruction is designed to be provided in small group structures or co-teaching situations, and incorporates many of the same elements of individualized

instruction, relating to the unique learning needs of the student and ensuring access to the general education curriculum as appropriate. This can include specific interventions targeted to skill deficits and curricular targets. The amount of this instruction varies based on the instructional needs of the students.

Work load review for individualized and specialized instruction should include a discussion of the activities and educationally related factors in Section 4 and the time required for this type of instruction within the framework of the workday.

CONSULTATION, COLLABORATION, AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Special education educators are required to consult, collaborate and problem solve with numerous groups. These groups include, but are not limited to, general education teachers and administrative personnel, paraprofessional groups in the school setting, parents, community members, private service providers, and other special education instructional and support personnel. Consultative services may be indicated on a student's IEP and refer to the frequency of activities necessary to effectively deliver the student's IEP. Collaboration may include but not be limited to, weekly team meetings, common planning times, regular parent communications, problem-solving meetings, modeling and training with team members, and instructional service modifications and accommodations. Response-to-Intervention (RtI)/Problem Solving also requires meetings to identify strategies to increase the capacity of general education curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of students with significant learning needs.

Workload review of consultation, collaboration and problem solving should include a discussion of the time required for these activities, as well as the other educationally related factors in Section 4.

ATTENDANCE AT IEP MEETINGS AND OTHER STAFF CONFERENCES

The IEP is the cornerstone of the state and federal requirements for free appropriate public education for students with disabilities. Within the IEP, all specially designed instruction and support services are delineated. Staff and parent conferences pertaining to the planning of special education services and/or the review/analysis of data driving student interventions is an integral part of the provision of services for students with disabilities.

The workload review must include a discussion of the time necessary to develop, monitor, and revise the IEP and the educationally related factors in Section 4.

PAPERWORK AND REPORTING

Special education educators are required to complete paperwork and reporting related to the IEP and student instruction. The amount of time needed to complete this required paperwork is separate from the time necessary for individualized or specialized instruction. The IEP is an essential part of each student's instructional program and is mandated by Federal and State Law. The workload review should include a discussion of time required for paperwork and reporting related to the IEP and student instruction and the educationally related factors in Section 4.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL, MEDICAL, and BEHAVIORAL

Certain times require special education staff to respond to unexpected social emotional, medical, or behavioral student needs and/or crisis situations. Time devoted to crisis management may take away from instruction or completion of other workload components. The amount of time special educators spend on managing these unpredictable-social emotional, medical, or behavioral needs should be considered as part of a special educator's workload. The workload plan analysis for crisis management shall include:

- Time required to develop, follow, and evaluate Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs).
 - Time spent with students while in crisis
 - Time required to communicate with other team members. parents, outside providers. or outside agencies regarding student crises
 - Time required to meet and complete coping/debriefing forms and additional paperwork arising from a crisis incident
 - Time required to collaborate on threat assessments

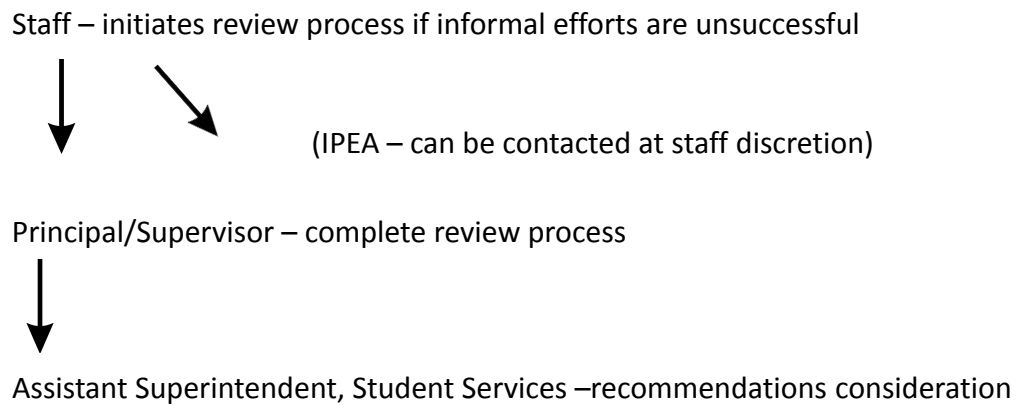
Additionally, the workload plan analysis for crisis management shall include consideration of time required to compensate for missed service minutes or non student contact minutes.

6. REVIEW STRUCTURE

We strongly encourage building leadership to engage special education staff in the informal resolution of any workload concerns. If this is unsuccessful, special education staff members can request a workload review with their building administrator. The building leadership will contact the appropriate Student Services Administrator to participate in the review of the above listed factors and considerations. If it is determined that

adjustments in staffing, work load, or other accommodations are to be recommended, such recommendations shall be shared with the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services for consideration.

Proposed communication flow for Work Load Review:



**Quarterly update to IPEA through TACT process of work load reviews and resolutions.

**Workload Review Documentation: [Workload Review Worksheet](#); [Review & Recommendations Sheet](#)

7. IELRA COMPLIANCE

A copy of this work load plan shall be provided to any District labor organization for determination as to whether the adoption of this plan implicates any bargaining obligations pursuant to the Illinois Education Labor Relations Act (IELRA).