A large, teal-tinted hourglass is positioned on the left side of the slide. The top bulb is partially filled with dark sand, while the bottom bulb is mostly empty, with a small amount of sand at the base. The hourglass is set against a light background with a vertical yellow stripe running alongside it.

Every Minute Counts: Calculating IEP Services to Improve Student Outcomes in Washington State

Report of the Existing Policies, Guidance,
and Related Resources

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Every Minute Counts: Calculating IEP Services to Improve Student Outcomes in Washington State is a project between members of the Institute for Innovation in Development, Engagement, and Learning Systems (IDEALS) and the Special Education Division of the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The objective is to identify existing problems of practice related to IEP development and identify best practices for **determining the amount and type of special education and related services contained in students' IEPs.**

1**Literature Review**

- Identify literature, existing policies, guidance, and related resources.
- Construct a report of the existing literature and resources.

2**Focus Groups**

- Plan, recruit, and conduct focus groups with individuals from the three partner groups.
- Determine current practices related to calculating the amount and type of special education and related services contained in students' IEPs.
- Understand any problems of practices and identify potential solutions and best practices, along with suggestions for disseminating such information to improve practices.

3**Technical Assistance Guide**

- Draft a technical assistance guide and collect feedback from partners.
- Finalize the guide and prepare for dissemination.

4**Dissemination**

- Develop and deliver a webinar.
- Advertise and recruit participants for a PLC.
- Develop with OSPI's instructional designers and their LMS (Learning Management System) to deliver professional learning through the PLC, including an online module and ongoing engagement opportunities.

5**Related Initiatives and Next Steps**

- Plan and discuss sustainability measures.
- Identify ways to measure impact.
- Measure impact using statewide data.
- Consult on related initiatives, including the Keeping Exceptional Educators Grant, CEEDAR WA TA, Teacher Residency, and Inclusionary Practices Professional Development Project.

SCOPE OF THE EVERY MINUTE COUNTS PROJECT

IEP SERVICE MATRIX

Frequency

How long and how often each session of the service will be provided.

This information may include the amount of time each day or week, and how many times per week or month.

Location

Where services will be provided (e.g., general education setting, special education setting).

With the federal and state focus on least restricted environment (LRE), it is extremely important to clearly identify the specific location of each service being provided. Without this information, it is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately determine the student's LRE for reporting purposes.

Projected date(s) for initiation

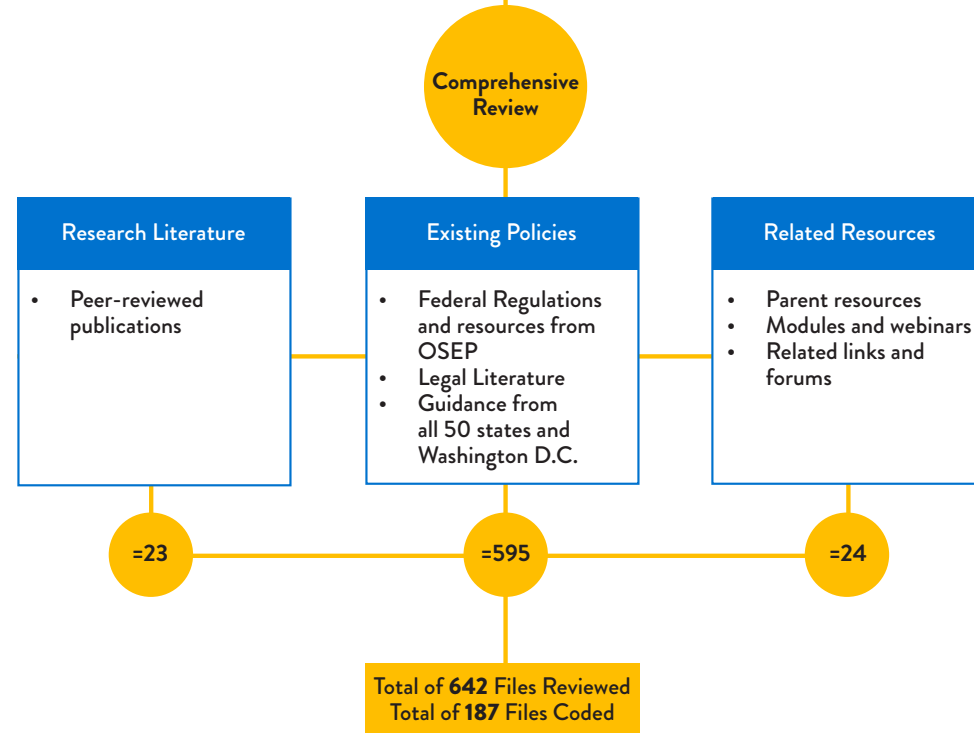
When the service will start.

Duration

When the service will end.

In some cases, the duration may be less than an entire school year.

However, the duration should not extend past one year, since the IEP is required to be updated annually.

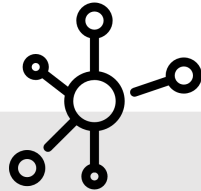


INDIVIDUALIZED DECISION-MAKING

The Supreme Court has referred to the development of special education and related services as a general standard, not a formula; there can be no prescriptive model for determining whether special education programming is appropriate or delivers educational benefit. Rather, the unique circumstances of the student are to be the centerpiece of any and all IEP decisions.



Student-
focused



Connection



Goals



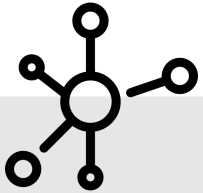
Data

INDIVIDUALIZED DECISION-MAKING



Student-
focused

Remaining **student-focused** ensures that special education, related services, and other supports not only allow a student to make progress in the general education curriculum but also advance toward student-specific academic and/or functional annual goals; participate in extracurricular and nonacademic activities; and be educated alongside other students, including peers without disabilities.



Connection

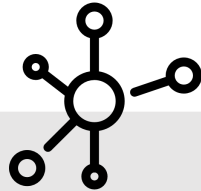
Teams are advised to thoughtfully consider the **interconnectedness of the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and the annual goals and objectives** within the IEP document.

INDIVIDUALIZED DECISION-MAKING

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Student-
focused



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Goals



Data

INDIVIDUALIZED DECISION-MAKING



Goals

The literature also establishes the connection between goals and services and emphasizes the importance of **identifying the annual goals of the IEP prior to determining the type and amount of special education and related services.**



Data

Continuous and accurate progress monitoring, as well as reviewing data in a timely manner, is an important part of the data-driven decision-making process to determine and iteratively revise the types and amount of special education and related services.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES



- As mandated by IDEA, teachers and service providers should **select academic and behavioral interventions that have research to indicate effectiveness.**
- Sources of information about the research base include professional journals and websites, such as the **What Works Clearinghouse Find What Works** sponsored by the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES), and the **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards for Evidence-Based Practices.**

CLARITY WITHIN THE IEP

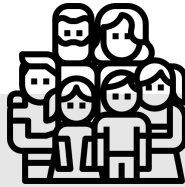


- The U.S. Department of Education has directed school districts to provide sufficient detail in IEPs to ensure that **the resources the district will commit is clear to all members of the IEP Team, including families.**
- **Such clarity in the IEP helps ensure that educators and service providers clearly understand their responsibilities and expectations in implementing the specific services to which a student is entitled based on assessments of the student's needs, and supports future decisions for continuing, revising, or discontinuing services.**

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Team
Process



Family
Voice



Related
Service
Providers



Out-of-the-
Box Thinking

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



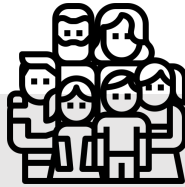
Team
Process

The development of an IEP requires a collaborative process, which includes general education classroom teachers, special education teachers, related service providers, parents, and the student. Eliciting and valuing the interrelated knowledge and disciplinary expertise of the IEP Team, especially from families, are important in determining special education and related services. Although special educators may be considered the primary professional responsible for collecting data and reporting progress towards goals and objectives, the nature of services should be delivered across a variety of settings. Thus, decisions should include all providers, such as general educators and related service providers, within those settings.

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Team
Process



Family
Voice

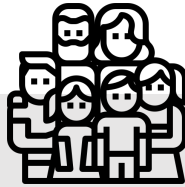


Related
Service
Providers



Out-of-the-
Box Thinking

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



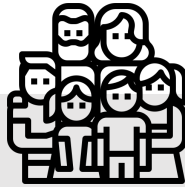
Family Voice

As integral members of the IEP Team, the information and perspectives shared by families are crucial in ensuring that decisions on special education and related services are based on the child's unique needs. Parental voice and involvement can shed light on why the child's needs warrant specific services and how services can benefit the child. As a collaborative process, other members of the IEP Team should clarify decisions regarding special education and related services, as well as explain the research foundations implicate certain interventions and services that are based on evidence.

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Team
Process



Family
Voice

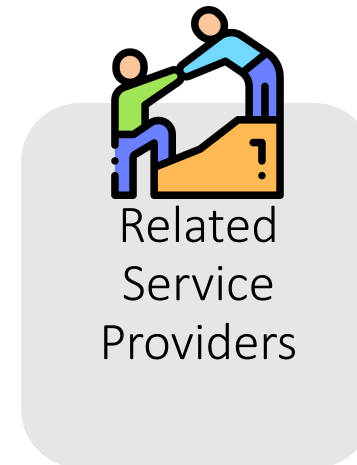


Related
Service
Providers



Out-of-the-
Box Thinking

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM

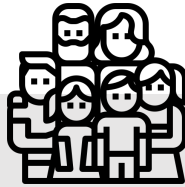


The related service provider plays a key role in communicating assessment results and progress reports to the entire team to assist the team in making sense of the data to then determine the appropriateness of the related service, and if applicable, continuation, changes, or discontinuation of the service. **Related service providers may remove barriers by integrating therapies across school settings and in naturally occurring environments, and further enable others (e.g., staff, parents, peers) to implement and support the therapy goals.**

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Team
Process



Family
Voice



Related
Service
Providers



Out-of-the-
Box Thinking

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Out-of-the-Box Thinking

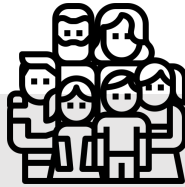
Student-centered decision-making may necessitate interventions be provided in a variety of settings (e.g., academics, lunch, recess, and specials). Flexible scheduling permits a combination of delivery models (e.g., direct, integrated/collaboration indirect, and consultation) to be provided to or on behalf of the student and ensures that the needs of the student are being addressed.

The IEP Team may also consider whether related services will be provided to a student individually or within a group.

TEAM DECISION-MAKING & THINKING CREATIVELY AS A TEAM



Team
Process



Family
Voice



Related
Service
Providers



Out-of-the-
Box Thinking

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS



- The literature includes **guidance and prompts for IEP Teams to consider and discuss** to determine what types of services are needed, including the amount, location, and provider for that service, and address:
 - General Considerations Based on the Needs of the Student
 - General Considerations Based on Educational Programming and Access
 - General Considerations Related Directly to the IEP
 - Considerations Specific to Special Education Services
 - Considerations Specific to Related Services
 - *Educational Relevance, Clarity of Purpose, and Necessity of Related Services*
 - *Service Delivery Model*
 - *Impact on Other Services*
 - *Across Settings*
 - *Team Collaboration and Data Collection*
 - *Additional Considerations for Determining Related Services*
 - *Considerations for Modifying Related Services*
 - *Considerations for Discontinuing Related Services*

PRECAUTIONS

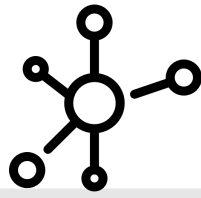


- The unique educational needs of the student are to be the central focus of the decision-making process and IEP Teams should **refrain from basing decisions narrowly on the student's category of eligibility** (i.e., the needs commonly associated with the disability category), which would narrowly and inaccurately placing parameters around the type and amount of special education and related services would be detrimental.
- Additionally, when services are being determined, **the IEP Team and school administrators cannot consider the expense of special education services. Convenience of school or program scheduling, class periods and bell schedules, availability of the service provider, or other administrative reasons should not drive IEP Team decisions.**
- Lastly, students are to receive the full duration of service as indicated on their IEPs. **Delivering services with fidelity, including frequency, duration, and setting, as well as implementing interventions with fidelity is crucial.** IEP alterations that are conducted without required documentation must not occur, as this can negatively impact service efficacy and shared decision-making on behalf of the student.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUPS



Flexibility of the IEP service matrix to encourage and reflect an increasing level of collaboration and co-planning to deliver SDI and services within the general education setting.



Clear connections with the PLAFFP, goals and objectives, and access to the general education setting.



Up-to-date data that is varied in its sources that has been collaboratively gathered as the GPS for making service matrix decisions.



Shifting away from a focus on compliance to the true intention of the IEP and its implementation.

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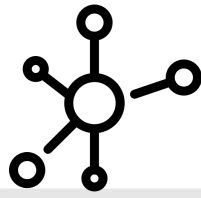


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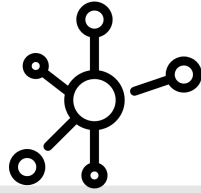


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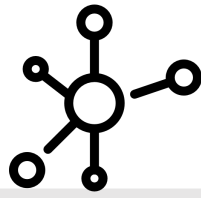


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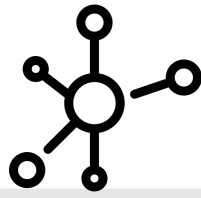


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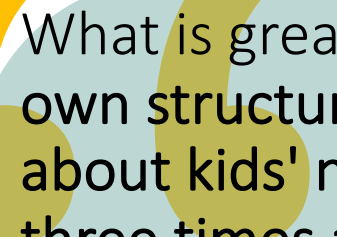


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PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FOCUS GROUPS



Shifting away from a focus on compliance to the true intention of the IEP and its implementation.



What is great is once you sort of can talk to the staff and **release them from their own structures that they sort of bind themselves to, they're very capable of thinking about kids' needs and designing service delivery models that are once or twice or three times a week versus the standard five daily.** It's almost like you have to grant them permission and then, in some cases model what that walk through a service matrix with them and then sort of **talk out loud about that.** And in my experience in three school districts to ones I've modeled that they take it and run with it and apply that across their IEPs. It's the provision of a model in the granting of permission and you see wonderful things that case managers can figure out and **flexibility and not feel guilty about not serving five days a week.** I think that's a big part of it is they think **they have to justify their existence by the amount of time they spend with kids and so, and you also see that as the services [gets] reduced, [you] see more consult minutes being added to the IEP for general education teachers for that structured collaboration time.** I think we have great people in classrooms and schools. It's this giving them a vision that they can see themselves working within, and then they take that and apply it as professionals.

