

Kentucky Department of Education
Division of Learning Services
Collaborative Teaching Practices for Exceptional Children
Question and Answer Document
June 2011

This Question and Answer Document (Q & A) is intended to provide guidance on implementation and documentation of Collaborative Teaching/ Co-Teaching Practices for students with disabilities in Kentucky.

1. What is the recommended statewide terminology, being promoted for use across Kentucky schools when school personnel are working together with students with disabilities?

ANSWER: “Collaborative Teaching” and “Co-teaching” are the preferred terminology to be used in Kentucky school districts:

- “Collaborative teaching” is the preferred umbrella term for the joint efforts of two certified teachers with different areas of expertise (e.g., a regular education teacher and a special education teacher or ELL teacher or gifted/talented teacher or reading specialist) partnering to share responsibility for designing, delivering, monitoring and evaluating instruction for a diverse group of learners in general education classes. The key idea is two teachers with different knowledge, skills, and talents.
- “Co-teaching” (Friend, 2008) is a specific type of collaborative teaching format and special education service delivery option which daily/weekly involves two or more certified teachers (i.e., regular and special education), who share instructional responsibility and joint accountability for a single group of diverse learners via partnership strategies in a general education setting.

2. What is the difference between ‘co-teaching’ and historical ‘team teaching’?

ANSWER: While co-teaching and team teaching are similar, the differences primarily involve the number of students in the classroom and the diversity regarding teacher areas of professional expertise and approaches to individualization.

- Team teaching is characterized by the combination of two or more classes of students and their general education content teachers (teacher/student ratio remains constant).
- Co-teaching typically adds a teacher to one classroom in which there are several students with disabilities included. In this way, co-teaching can dramatically reduce the teacher/student ratio in a classroom and introduce an additional level of expertise and focus on the individual learning needs of students.

3. What are common partnership approaches to “Co-Teaching” for students with disabilities?

ANSWER: Co-teaching is typically implemented by arranging teachers and students using or adapting the six basic approaches listed below (adapted from Marilyn Friend, 2008). Multiple and varied approaches should be used in every setting and class period.

Whole Group Approaches:

- Teaming, involves co-teaching partners teaching in front of the class, each fully and simultaneously engaged in leading the delivery of core instruction. Co-teachers may have different but equally active roles. For example, one co-teacher may be leading the large group lesson while the other charts key points/ models note-taking (Speak & Chart) or restates key concepts for clarification (Speak & Add).
- One Teach, One Observe, also known as “Lead and Support”, is implemented with one co-teaching partner leading instruction, while the other collects data through observation. The co-teaching partners pre-determine specific observational information to gather during instruction and together analyze the data for use in making instructional decisions or to form temporary skill groups.
- One Teach, One Assist, also known as “Shadow Teaching” or “One Teach, One Drift” consists of one co-teacher being primarily responsible for delivery of core instruction for the day’s lesson while the other co-teacher circulates through the classroom providing assistance to students as needed. Support to students might include examples such as cuing students to employ a previously taught learning strategy or attend to tasks, helping students do their science experiment from directions, prompting student writing responses in progress or assisting them to edit. This approach is the most commonly overused, and should be used sparingly.

Small Group Approaches:

- Through Station Teaching, co-teaching partners divide students into 2-3 rotating small groups and divide content into instructional segments which students encounter in learning centers or ‘stations’. Each teaching partner takes responsibility for delivery of a portion or segment of the days’ instruction within one station. All students will access each co-teaching partner and every station by rotating from one station to the next; some stations may structure groups or pairs to work independently with materials on a pre-planned activity while others feature teacher-directed activities for small groups. Station teaching can be used effectively in any content area, when the content is not required to be taught in sequential order.
- In Parallel Teaching, the co-teaching partners divide the class into two groups and lead the same content instruction with both groups simultaneously (with pre-planned common learning targets and objectives). This approach is recommended for frequent use as it allows for smaller groups and more individualized teacher attention during instruction, while maximizing student participation and minimizing student behavior problems.
- In Alternative Teaching, one co-teaching partner instructs the large group while the other works briefly with a temporarily formed small group for a specific instructional purpose identified in advance (which may be enrichment, re-teaching, interest area, pre-teaching, reviewing directions just given, etc). Students return to the large group and continue participating in classroom instruction, group work or assignments. Small groups should be formed and re-formed based on ongoing formative assessment and should avoid any consistent segregation which stigmatizes students with disabilities.

Since each approach above has advantages and disadvantages, multiple and varied approaches are recommended for any given co-teaching arrangement. Through planning, co-teaching partners determine the best co-teaching approach for any given lesson or unit, based on curriculum, specific purposes for instruction, and the needs of students.

For staff training and guidance, contact your regional Special Education Cooperative. Resources for more in-depth descriptions; examples of the six co-teaching approaches above which were adapted from Marilyn Friend may be found in the book, Co-teach! and in the “Power of 2” (DVD), both by Marilyn Friend (2008).

In addition, educators may adapt and combine these basic approaches to meet specific needs. For example, in Kentucky, it is not unusual to see a “skill groups” format, a common adaptation, used in Reading First programs. This ‘Skill Groups’ format involves including every student in one of several different skill groups simultaneously. **Skill Groups** are formed and re-formed continually, based on formative assessment, which identifies instructional skill needs of all the students. Grouping is fluid, temporary and flexible; this format is designed to target immediate student needs. This approach should be used along with other approaches above – not as the sole delivery method.

4. Why are we changing our historical use of the term “Collaboration” in special education in Kentucky?

ANSWER: A common term used in Kentucky in the past – collaboration – is not a concept unique to special education and has caused some confusion in schools. This term must be expanded in ways that reclaim its general meaning.

- Collaboration: Collaboration is by definition a broad term, **which means ‘a style of interaction’**. It is the way people work together as professionals across countless and varied activities (many NOT related to special education) toward mutual goals with shared responsibility, shared resources, and shared accountability. The term ‘collaboration’ does NOT imply a specific model or program.
- Many schools who are organizing professional learning communities are using this term in a non-special education context (e.g., Rick DuFour (2003) defines collaboration as “...a systematic process in which people work together, interdependently...in order to improve results.”). Grade level or departmental teams, site councils, middle school teams, TATs, and many other educational groups are currently engaging in collaboration.

Professionals regularly collaborate; however, in special education, we need to be specific about what collaboration means for students with disabilities. We intend to use the term co-teaching from here forward to more clearly describe the partnership of a general and a special education teacher in planning, teaching, monitoring and assessing a single group of students who are diverse learners in a general education classroom which they share.

5. How do the “Highly Qualified (HQ) Teacher” requirements in “No Child Left Behind” (ESEA) legislation relate to special education teachers in co-teaching situations in the general education classroom?

ANSWER: Special Education teachers who are fully certified and licensed by the state meet the status of ‘highly qualified’ in special education (under **IDEA 2004**; 34 CFR 300.18), but are not automatically “**Highly Qualified under NCLB**”, in specific subject content areas. Special Education teachers will need to work with their building principal /Director of Special Education to verify whether they meet “Highly Qualified (HQ) Teacher status under NCLB”. For NCLB qualifications regarding content area certification in standard subject areas, see the Educational Professional Standards Board (EPSB) website,
<http://www.kyepsb.net/documents/NCLB/HQ%20Addenda%20revised%201209.pdf>

If a special education teacher is not “Highly Qualified” under NCLB in the core academic subject which is assigned for co-teaching, his/her role in the “co-teaching” partnership in the general education classroom is, among other things, to reinforce, replicate, apply and extend subject area content instruction with their partner.

In this situation, the general education teacher, who is “highly qualified” in the core academic subject, must take the partnership lead in initial design and delivery of subject area content instruction. The special education teacher “reinforces instruction” during and after the initial delivery of content, but may not be sole provider of initial subject area content instruction.

The certified special education teacher is ‘highly qualified’ in providing specially designed instruction and adaptations and modifications that meet the needs of diverse learners and students with disabilities. Therefore, the special education teacher works as a partner with the general education teacher to provide the following types of essential expertise for the benefit of all students, including diverse learners and students with disabilities included in the classroom:

- Adapt curriculum
- Use behavioral supports and interventions
- Select appropriate accommodations and modifications
- Teach students study skills
- Teach students organizational skills
- Reinforce initial instruction already received from a teacher who is “highly qualified” in the core academic subject under NCLB.

The concept of being specifically and ‘highly’ qualified, in whatever area, as a professional (i.e., ‘certified’ through a rigorous sequence of higher education training courses and practicum experiences) applies generally to both co-teachers. Since co-teachers are usually not both ‘highly qualified’ in the same areas and in the same ways (NCLB or IDEA), they must work together to bring their combined expertise to bear on educating all students.

Because they possess complimentary skills and training, each co-teacher takes the partnership lead in design and delivery of instruction in their respective area of expertise, whether that is subject area content expertise or strategic/specially designed instructional expertise. The other co-teacher works together with their partner to reinforce, replicate, apply and extend that instruction in working jointly with students. Both teachers have essential roles in educating all our students, and must be respected as professional equals in their school, in order to accomplish an effective joint partnership in the classroom.

6. Must “specially designed instruction” (SDI) be provided to the special education student solely by the special education teacher or can it be provided by the general education teacher? Under what conditions?

ANSWER: “Specially Designed Instruction” (SDI) must be provided by a teacher who is certified in special education and thus “highly qualified” under IDEA:

- A general education teacher, who is not highly qualified (i.e., ‘certified’) in special education, should not be the sole implementer of SDI, but should work with a special education teacher to implement specially designed instruction with students for whom they share responsibility.
- The special education teacher must take the partnership lead in the planning, designing, initial delivery, and monitoring of the SDI outlined in the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).
- The regular education teacher will need to support specially designed instruction, after initial SDI has been delivered by the special education teacher.
- The collaborating regular education teacher may also replicate and extend SDI, once jointly designed and initiated, to provide for generalization of target skills and behaviors in the general education environment.

7. Can Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) be provided by a paraeducator?

ANSWER: No. Paraprofessionals are not able to provide specially designed instruction (SDI), due to their lack of teacher certification, but they do serve an important “**supportive**” role. Therefore, a paraeducator must always be acting under the direct guidance and supervision of a special education teacher or credentialed related service personnel.

The following conditions should be in place for this to occur:

- The general and/or special education teacher systematically design and deliver core content and specially designed instruction to the student.
- Adequate training has been provided to the paraeducator, for functions expected in the supportive role (e.g., reinforcement/review of skills or concepts).
- Routine monitoring of student performance by a special education teacher or related-services professional occurs to ensure student progress toward annual IEP goal(s) is maximized during supportive activities conducted by paraeducator.
- On-going supports are made available, as needed by the paraprofessional.

For example, paraeducators may facilitate the use of assistive technology, lead a review of concepts already taught, or assist a teacher in monitoring student attention, behavior, and work. However, they should not lead large group instruction, plan or deliver initial instruction, interpret test results, make instructional decisions, or assume primary or sole responsibility for a group of students over an extended period of time. **Therefore, it is inappropriate to expect or allow a paraprofessional to be a co-teacher. They may NOT replace the special education teacher.** Overall, the learning process can be enhanced via a paraeducator in a variety of ways (e.g. organizational supports, assist with behavior plan, assist in collecting progress monitoring or SDI data, drill and practice strategies, etc.). For more information regarding appropriate support roles and activities for para-professionals, see the list on p. 19 of Marilyn Friend’s book, Co-Teach! (Friend, 2008). For general information, see Q & A on “Paraeducators in Kentucky”.

8. How do related-service providers support Co-Teaching?

ANSWER: There are three related-service SDI delivery structures that support Co-Teaching. Related Service Providers should be a part of the SDI process along with the special and general education teacher as determined by the IEP. The following structures may be applied to ensure the student receives the assistance needed to benefit from special education and to facilitate access to the general curriculum:

- **Classroom Suggestions:** Verbal or written suggestions that require regular classroom implementation, but do not require regular follow-up.
- **Role Release:** Includes activities typically carried out by classroom staff that require training and regular follow-up.
- **Discipline Specific:** Services are activities generally provided by the related service personnel until a time when they can be role released to the classroom staff.

Reference: Resource Manual for Educationally Related Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy in Kentucky Public Schools", Sept. 2006.

9. How does co-teaching relate to federal and state requirements for maintaining a “Continuum of Services/ Alternative Placements” within each district for students with disabilities?

ANSWER: The federal **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** requires that schools ensure provision of the ‘continuum of alternative placements’, which include a range of locations which accommodate differences in intensity of needs and level of structure in the delivery of special education and related services for students with disabilities. Placement location options required by IDEA include “regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction and instruction in hospitals and institutions” [see 34 CFR 300.115 and 707 KAR 1:350].

Under the IDEA legislation, students with disabilities are entitled to “access, “participation” and “progress” in the general education curriculum, non-academic activities, and extracurricular activities. The general education classroom must be considered as the first option (as the least restrictive environment) with the use of supplementary aids and services based on the needs of the student and the student’s disability. However, the general education classroom may not be the sole option considered. The ARC must consider individual student needs and use evaluation and progress data to inform all least restrictive continuum and placement decisions.

10. Explain and clarify the misuse of the term “full collaboration model” in Kentucky.

ANSWER: The term “full collaboration model” is sometimes used incorrectly, in a schoolwide context, to mean that all students with disabilities and their teachers will be automatically placed in the general education classroom. For reasons listed above (see Q#9), **this automatic practice is unlawful** because it predetermines placement options for students with disabilities and thereby ignores the individualized nature of the ARC decision-making process required by IDEA. It is, however, desirable for schools engaged in improvement initiatives and efforts to close achievement gaps to focus on 1) ensuring all students' access to the general education curriculum, and 2) adopting effective inclusive practices which create a positive school-wide culture and climate. This may be accomplished by increasing the school's capacity to provide

effective differentiated instruction and co-teaching support in general education classes, such that students with disabilities may be successfully included where appropriate.

11. Is it permissible to remove students with disabilities from the regular education setting, if that is where the IEP says they receive services?

ANSWER: Occasionally it may be necessary to remove a student for a specific instructional process, such as completing an assignment in the computer lab. This type of occasional “pull out” would not necessitate a change in placement. However, if the student is removed from the general education setting routinely, the ARC will need to reconvene to review progress monitoring and other data to determine if the present co-teaching service delivery structure is sufficient or whether the IEP needs to be amended to include increased delivery of SDI within a resource setting, for part of the day.

12. Can a special education teacher take a small group of students (e.g., a mixture of students with disabilities and students without disabilities) to another location or the ‘resource room’ for instructional purposes?

ANSWER: As part of the collaborative process, IDEA allows for the incidental benefit of students without disabilities as a result of the instruction from the special education teacher. However, a student without disabilities cannot be removed by the special education teacher to a separate location on a routine basis for extended lengths of time. If a special education teacher pulls general education students who do not have IEPs along with those who do, on a relatively regular basis, into the special education resource room setting, a legal problem is created.

13. What is the suggested cap on the number of students with disabilities receiving special education services that should be placed in a single general education classroom?

ANSWER: In general, the number of students with disabilities in a regular education classroom should NOT exceed **33%** of the total number of students in that class. This number is a *guideline*; the actual number of students included may need to be limited further in specific situations. The goal of the determination of ‘least restrictive environment’ is to integrate students with disabilities as much as possible with their non-disabled peers and to provide access to the general education curriculum. However, if too many students with disabilities are clustered together in one setting, this positive peer exposure is reduced and the desired features of the general education setting (e.g., pace of instruction, cooperative group work, flexible small groups, and peer-tutoring) are greatly compromised. Refer to your district’s policy to determine cap size.

14. How many students with disabilities can be assigned to the caseload of a special education teacher who provides services through a collaborative teaching model (either co-teaching or consultation)?

ANSWER: Per 707 KAR 1:350, section 2, “If a teacher provides services through the collaborative teaching model, the maximum caseload shall not exceed **twenty** (20) children with disabilities for secondary, and **fifteen** (15) children with disabilities for primary” (elementary). Furthermore, no caseload waivers are granted for exceeding these limits set for collaborative teaching (and co-teaching) caseloads.

15. What is the single most important factor for effectively scheduling teachers and students in an effort to implement co-teaching practices for students with disabilities?

ANSWER: Districts should consider the scheduling of students with disabilities first in order to ensure that co-teaching structures are in place. This process ensures that least restrictive environments, teacher caseload, teacher planning, and individual student needs for specially designed instruction can be met.

The following are practices that schools who are experiencing success with co-teaching recommend:

- Begin scheduling by first selecting co-teaching partners that can best meet the needs of all students within the co-taught classroom, rather than teacher selection based on automatic rotation or what the master schedule dictates.
- Schedule fewer than the maximum students at the beginning of the year in co-taught classes, to leave space for transfer students who arrive mid-year.
- If possible, assign a special education teacher to co-teach in the same subject areas that they also teach in the resource room, for content consistency. Ideally, there are co-teaching and resource class options for similar content at the same time, so that students who are able to transition into the general education setting during the year have an available general education class which is co-taught to move into when the time comes for transition.

Your special education cooperatives have regional consultants who may be able to assist you with effective scheduling in support of co-teaching. In addition, resources that some have found to be helpful with scheduling include the following: 1) Making Creative Schedules Work, (Merenbloom, Elliot Y. & Kalina, B. A., ISBN-13: 978-1412924252), 2) Co-Teach! (Friend, M., 2008, ISBN: 978-0-9778503-0-3), and 3) "50 Ways to Keep your Co-Teacher"(Murawski, W. & Dieker, L., 2008).

16. Who is responsible for providing progress monitoring data when teachers are working together to teach or deliver special services to students with disabilities in a co-teaching partnership?

ANSWER: Schools must ensure that student progress toward IEP goals is documented and reported to parents and educators making data-based decisions at annual ARC meetings (707 KAR 1:320). The special education teacher retains the responsibility to ensure that routine monitoring is occurring as well as to report progress on IEP goals/objectives to the ARC. Co-teaching partners share in the responsibility for on-going progress monitoring of students with disabilities. Roles and responsibilities should be established early in the grading period, with time allocated for co-teachers to share in the analysis of progress monitoring data to inform specially designed instruction.

17. Within the co-teaching partnership, who is responsible for grading?

ANSWER: Both co-teaching partners are responsible for grading students in a co-taught classroom. Co-teachers should discuss in advance which grading strategies fit the entire class and which will be applied only to students with disabilities by virtue of their special needs and protected status under the law. Co-teachers need to discuss and jointly decide a framework for partnership grading that involves both ideas (Friend, 2008). The ARC should discuss issues such as grading if it is to be different from that of the rest of the class. (see 'Grading' references)

18. How does the ARC effectively determine whether a student with a disability should receive services through a collaborative delivery structure?

ANSWER: The ARC works through the development of the IEP, by reviewing and analyzing progress monitoring data, student work, and the appropriate service delivery format to enable a student to access the general education curriculum. *Co-teaching* is provided when there is a need for significant amounts of explicit ongoing specially designed instruction to be delivered in the general education setting by a regular and special education teacher in partnership, and when this intensive level of teacher support is critical to provide the student adequate access to the general education curriculum.

The ARC selects the method of service delivery based on assessment data and the individual student's strengths, abilities, and needs as documented in the IEP. Services and delivery structures cannot be selected solely on the basis of factors such as the disability category or availability of physical space, staffing and resources.

18a. How does the ARC document the 'least restrictive environment' (LRE) discussion and placement decision (involving collaborative co-teaching services)?

ANSWER: The LRE discussion and final placement decision are documented on the Conference Summary Form in Section F, labeled "Placement Options and Decisions" and in the notes section of the conference summary.

Upon completion of the IEP, the ARC reviews the goals, objectives/benchmarks, and services (including the service delivery format chosen), and discusses possible location(s) for service delivery, to determine the classes and activities in which the services will be implemented. Placement alternatives (listed on the conference summary form) include:

- Full time general education environment: The student participates only in the regular education environment. This may include regular education with supplementary aids and services, and/or regular education with specially designed instruction, including classes with co-teaching.
- Part time general education and Part time special education environment: The student participates in regular education, which may include co-teaching, and special education environments. The student is considered 'part time regular/part time special education' if the student is pulled out of regular education anytime, regardless of the amount of time.
- Full time special education environment: The student participates only in the special education environment; there is no participation with non-disabled peers for any part of the school day.

18b. How does the ARC document the details of the LRE decision by using the LRE section (box) on the IEP to explain the extent to which the student will not participate in general education classes?

ANSWER: The IEP includes a section/box, labeled “Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and General Education”, where the ARC must describe the extent to which the student will not participate in general education classes. The ARC may NOT leave this box blank. It must contain a statement which summarizes the extent of time the student is pulled out of regular education settings. If the student is receiving all educational services in the regular education class for the entire school day, there must be a statement to that effect and any routine exceptions (e.g., services in a special education setting) must also be specified in this section.

List the specific content classes where the student will not be joining peers in the regular education setting. If a middle or high school daily schedule is complex and includes a combination of pull-out and regular education class locations, it may be helpful to parents and teachers to list both (e.g., 1) list all classes which are pull out and, 2) list those classes where the student will receive instruction and services in a regular education setting) for added clarity when referencing the document in the future. See “Guidance Document, Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development” for examples on the [KDE website](#).

19. How does the ARC use the Location Column in the Special Education Services Table on the IEP (or the electronic form) to specify classes and collaborative co-teaching services and to help achieve clarity for future teachers/ readers who may be absent from the ARC meeting?

ANSWER: The ARC documents extra details of co-teaching in the Location column in the Special Education Services table on the IEP.

To use this IEP Services “Location” column fully, you may specify the type of collaborative service in addition to a location term to provide clarity for future readers. For each line of specially designed instruction in the special education services table, first specify the location (e.g., regular classroom, resource room, separate class). Then add two additional details where appropriate in the location column. In addition to including the location term, add the keyword for type of service (e.g., co-teaching) and the content area involved (e.g., Math). (See Q #21.)

20. How is co-teaching documented in the state approved IEP? How are roles of co-teachers documented in the IEP?

ANSWER: Co-Teaching details are entered in the Special Education table across multiple fields in one row across for each distinct type of service or content area as this example shows:

- Location: Regular Classroom with co-teaching in MATH
- Service Provider (by Service Position): Regular and Special Education teacher are listed jointly
- Service Minutes/Frequency/Period: 30 minutes/3 times/weekly

Service minutes (“per service frequency”) indicate the number of minutes for each distinct time the service is provided (see visual diagram of IEP table referenced in question #21).

21. In co-teaching situations, what do the service minutes represent in the table/grid for special education services within the IEP? How do you combine the information in columns on the IEP special education services table to accurately communicate/document the minutes of service?

ANSWER: In a co-teaching situation the IEP “service” minutes, listed in the special education services table under the header “Anticipated Frequency and Duration of Service”, represent the anticipated amount of time that specially designed instructional (SDI) services will be provided by the certified special education teacher within the joint parameters of a co-teaching partnership.

SDI minutes must be directly linked by indicating SDI will be delivered by “special education teacher”. Do not record the actual name of staff in this section as staff assignment may change during the year. The SDI minutes might not represent the total amount of time a special education teacher is present in the general education classroom (i.e., service minutes may NOT be the same as the full block of time scheduled for a total class period). Rather the service minutes represent the subset of time within the class period needed to provide specially designed instruction to a specific student, within the larger curriculum framework planned for the entire general education class. Also, these minutes do NOT include minutes that a student works with a para-educator.

To document service minutes on the IEP in the special education table, use a combination of the service minutes, service frequency, and service period columns. All three columns combine to detail time and must be filled out together, so all three correlate to each other. Service minutes (“per service frequency”) means the number of minutes devoted to SDI each distinct time the service is provided. Use ‘daily’ if the service is anticipated to occur on a daily basis; use ‘weekly’ if the service is anticipated to occur less than 5 times per week (e.g., 2x week, 3x week).

Example:

Special-Education	Anticipated-Frequency-and-Duration-Of-Service						Service-Provider (by Position) ^a	Location (e.g., Regular-Classroom, Resource-Room, Separate-Class) ^a
	Service-Minutes (Per-Service-Frequency) ^a	Service-Frequency (Number of times provided per Service-Period) ^a	Service-Period (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Annually) ^a	Start-Date ^a	End-Date ^a			
	30 ^a	Minutes ^a	3 ^a	Times Per ^a	Weekly ^a	9/16/11 ^a	9/15/12 ^a	
							Regular/Special Ed-Teacher ^a	Regular-Classroom, Co-Teaching-for-MATH ^a

22. How do you document the supportive role of the paraeducator within the IEP?

ANSWER: Describe in “Program Modifications and Supports for School Personnel” section.

23. What is consultation and when is consultation acceptable to use in working with students with disabilities?

ANSWER:

- “Consultation” occurs when a special education teacher or other specialist meets on a regularly scheduled basis with a general education teacher regarding instructional needs (academic or behavioral) of a student with a disability, and shares responsibility for ongoing progress, but typically spends less time than the general education teacher in direct instructional contact with the student in the class/content.
- **Students with an IEP must require/receive direct services and specially designed instruction (SDI), in order to meet eligibility standards for special education.** Therefore, consultation is an additional service provided by the special education teacher or related service personnel, in addition to SDI.
- **Consultation cannot be the only special education delivery method for students with disabilities. Students with IEPs cannot receive consultation only.**
- Consultation is provided to coordinate and plan support to extend specially designed instruction into the general education setting, and typically happens as a student is working towards generalization of goals/objectives across settings.
- Consultation is documented and described in the IEP under the section labeled “Supports for School Personnel” (see example in box below). Do not use the special education services minutes table in the IEP to document consultation.
- If with appropriate supports, the student is maintaining progress at high levels in the general education setting, the ARC should develop and implement a plan for promoting student independence and the fading of support and services, with a possible release from special education as the goal.

Examples:

1. Consultation might be used when a student receives services for behavioral issues.
 - The student receives specially designed instruction (SDI) for social skills 45 minutes weekly in the special education resource room. Consultation should occur between the special education teacher and the general education teacher regarding the generalization of targeted social skills across settings.
2. Consultation might also be used when a student receives specially designed instruction in a co-taught Language Arts (LA) Class and needs to apply and use those recently learned skills in a general education Social Studies class.
 - For example, John is placed in a co-taught LA class, with consultation support for his teacher in Social Studies. His special education teacher will consult with the Social Studies instructor regarding use of the learning strategies/graphic organizers, which John will initially learn through specially designed instruction in LA class. The special education teacher consults (on a daily, weekly or monthly basis as agreed during the year) to assist that teacher to encourage John to replicate/ apply the content enhancement strategies in Social Studies, and to monitor skill generalization.

Special Education Teacher will provide consultation support to Social Studies teacher regarding reading comprehension and learning strategy applications for John. Special Education and Social Studies teacher will meet for an hour twice monthly for first two months and routinely thereafter on a monthly basis for the remainder of the year, to review progress data and problem-solve any issues that arise.

Resources

Thanks to KDE staff, Special Education Cooperatives, and Dr. Marilyn Friend for sharing their time and expertise in the development of this document.

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