SEAPCO

Special Education Workload Plan

Effective Date: 2011-2012 School Year

BACKGROUND: Pursuant to Illinois State Board of Education administrative regulations (23 Administrative Code 226.735), school districts and cooperatives are required to adopt a work load plans for its special educators. As used in this document, the term “special educators” includes all certificated and non-certificated employees who provide services to students with disabilities, that is, those employees who provide all services required under students’ IEPs, as well as all needed ancillary and support services.

In accordance with the regulations, such a plan shall specify “limits on the work load of its special educators so that all services required under students’ IEPs, as well as all needed ancillary and support services, can be provided at the requisite level of intensity”.

DEVELOPMENT: This workload plan is intended for use by SEAPCO’s administration and all special education employees of SEAPCO. The plan was developed by SEAPCO in cooperation with its affected employees through a committee with representatives from the SEAPCO administration, the SEAPCO-EA (representing all categories of special educators except for registered physical and occupational therapy staff), and the registered occupational and physical therapy staff (not represented by the SEAPCO-EA).

The work load plan is based upon an analysis of activities for which SEAPCO’s special educators are responsible as specified in the next section. Each category lists activities and takes into account a review of historical and current staffing patterns, numbers of students receiving service, total IEP minutes, and minutes available for special educators to provide services. Environmental factors that influence service delivery include, but are not limited to, instructional space, preparation and selection of materials, district work assignments, supervision of paraprofessionals, and travel.

WORK LOAD ANALYSIS: The analysis examines four areas as required by the regulations. These areas include individualized instruction; consultative services and other collaboration among staff members; attendance at IEP meetings and other staff conferences; and paperwork and reporting. In the same ISBE regulations, class size and age range for special education classroom teachers is defined, and the number of children served by a speech and language pathologist is set at a maximum of sixty (60) students.

Annually, the following activities will occur:

1. SEAPCO will comply with state regulations regarding class size and age range. The special education administrators are responsible for ensuring such compliance through a review of each classroom on a continual basis throughout the year. Further, the special education administrator will discuss the matter with the district superintendent or his/her designee and the Director. Annually, the special education teachers will complete and submit a data collection log to their special education administrator. The log will contain information about class size/age range numbers for review by the special education administrator.
2. The special educators will review each student’s IEP to ensure that IEP services and accommodations are scheduled and implemented. When applicable, special educators will review the IEP accommodations and goals/objectives with general educators who have responsibility for IEP implementation.
3. Each special educator will submit a schedule to the special education administrator not later than the third week of the school year. The schedule will show how the IEP service minutes will be delivered.
4. This work load plan will be reviewed annually not later than June 30. If adjustments and/or changes are necessary, the plan changes will be submitted to the committee for review and then recommended to the SEAPCO Board of Control for action.
5. The work load plan shall not be deemed to part of, or included in, any collective bargaining agreement in the cooperative.

Special educators may request a review of their individual existing work loads by contacting their SEAPCO special education administrator. The special educator will be responsible for collecting data in each of the four components prior to making the request for review. The four components are listed here:

1. Individualized instruction;
2. Consultative services and other collaboration among staff members;
3. Attendance at IEP meetings and other staff conferences; and
4. Paperwork and reporting.

The special education administrator and special educator will review the data and discuss options and strategies to address legitimate concerns. The special education administrator will discuss the recommendations with the Director for final compliance with this plan.

**Work Load Analysis: Individualized Instruction**

In collaboration with the district administrators, the special education administrator will ensure that an appropriate amount of instructional service minutes are available to meet the individual needs of students with IEPs. The amount of direct service minutes delineated in each student’s IEP and the nature and intensity of services will be taken into account.

Such analysis will include data collected by special educators employed by SEAPCO. Data will include, but not be limited to, direct IEP minutes, class size, and individual and master schedules.

Class size and age range will not exceed the requirements outlined in Sections 226.720 and 730 of the ISBE Special Education Regulations (23 Administrative Code 226.720 and 23 Administrative Code 226.730).

Student facilitator paraprofessionals have responsibilities for assisting in the classroom, facilitating service delivery to students with disabilities, and maintaining a safe and healthy environment. Duties also extend to activities such as grading student work, making instructional materials, and supporting students in the general education classroom. At all times, the special education teacher must assign and directly supervise such activities. When appropriately trained by SEAPCO and as needed, cross-categorical and student facilitator paraprofessionals have responsibilities for implementing behavior management techniques and physical care (such as toileting and catheterization) as outlined in the student’s IEPs or as directed by the supervising certificated professional.

**Work Load Analysis: Consultative Services and Other Collaborations**

Consultative services may be listed on an individual student’s IEP with a specified amount of minutes delineated for a special educator to consult with service providers in order to effectively deliver the student’s IEP. Also, consultative services refer to the amount of time needed to discuss a student’s instructional program with staff, administrators, parents, and private providers on behalf of the students.

Alternatively, consultative services refer to the amount of time needed to mentor and collaborate with general and special educators regarding effective teaching and behavior management strategies and curricular modifications; accommodations; adaptive, assistive, and augmentative communication devices; social/emotional development of students; and crisis intervention. Such services may be part of individual student IEPs and/or be requested by district and special education administrators. The special educators will review the data with the special educator administrators and submit recommendations to the Director. The Director will make assignments based on data collected by the special educators in conjunction with the recommendations of the special education administrators.

All special educators will participate in applicable professional development as may be required by district and SEAPCO administrators.

Student facilitator paraprofessionals may be required to participate in staff meetings and applicable professional development. Communications and collaborations with parents is not part of the paraprofessional’s responsibilities unless specifically required by the special education administrator.

**Work Load Analysis: Attendance at IEP Meetings and Staff Conferences**

SEAPCO special educators (except for paraprofessionals) are required to participate in student IEP meetings, including initial and annual review IEP meetings, transition plans, team problem solving meetings, and domain meetings, and all other meetings related to the development of appropriate programming for students who are part of the educator’s case load. In addition, staff and parent conferences will be considered as part of the work load analysis for special educators.

Special educators (except for student facilitator paraprofessionals) with an assigned student case load will be required to have regular contact with parents; such contact will be documented by the special educator.

Student facilitator paraprofessionals will participate in IEP and other staff or parent meetings when required by the special education administrator.

**Work Load Analysis: Paperwork and Reporting**

SEAPCO special educators are required to complete all paperwork associated with IEP development and initial, tri-annual, and all other evaluations for their assigned student case load. The IEP is an essential part of each student’s instructional program and is mandated by federal and state laws and regulations. Such paperwork includes, but is not limited to, progress monitoring data, current levels of performance, goals/benchmark objectives, transition plans.

SEAPCO special educators will complete other administrative paperwork and reporting as required by local, state, and federal administrators.

Student facilitator paraprofessionals may be required to collect data and report the data to a special educator and/or the special education administrator.

**Work Load Analysis: Travel**

The administration will make every effort to minimize the travel requirements within the member districts.

IELRA Compliance: A copy of this plan shall be provided to any existing SEAPCO labor organizations for determination as to whether the adoption of this plan implicates any bargaining obligations pursuant to the *Illinois Education Labor Relations Act* (IELRA).