

Reminder:

All communications that occur in this format are open to the public. Please refrain from unnecessary comments.

Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

May 21, 2024



Agenda

1. Call to order (5:30 pm)
2. Approval of Minutes: [SEPAC Meeting Notes-1-16-2024.pdf](#)
3. Approval of Minutes: [3-19-2024 SEPAC Meeting Notes 2.pdf](#)
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Director (or Assistant Director) of Special Education Committee Presentation:
 - a. Findings from OCR
 - b. Current open positions in Special Education
 - c. Explanation of Resource/Extended Resource Rooms
 - d. How to prepare for school in August (focus on transitional grades)
 - i. How do parents prepare?
 - ii. How do schools prepare? What happens in the spring?
 - e. Explanation of direct service minutes vs. indirect service minutes on IEPs
6. Recognition of Audience
 - a. a. (Please sign up through the chat option of the webinar. Each participant who signs up will have 3 minutes to make a public comment. This meeting is open to the public, but it is not a public forum. The primary focus of the meeting is the business listed on the agenda. Generally only the Council person will acknowledge public commentary. Please be assured, however, that all members welcome and appreciate your comments.)
7. Success Stories/ Feedback
8. Wrap up on the SEPAC- how did it go for the year?
 - a. Any changes for next year?
 - b. How to grow membership?
 - c. Discussion of agenda topics for next meeting (notification to SEPAC)
9. Community Events/Resources Available
10. Open stakeholders- survey for next year
11. Open Stakeholders:
 - a. Non-teaching staff
 - b. High School Student Representative
 - c. Vice Chair position
12. Establish Next Meeting Date
13. Adjournment of meeting

Special Education Leadership Updates

- Findings from OCR: General Counsel Tara Brandner
- Current open positions in Special Education
- Explanation of Resource/Extended Resource Rooms
- How to prepare for school in August (focus on transitional grades)
 - How do parents prepare?
 - How do schools prepare? What happens in the spring?
- Explanation of direct service minutes vs. indirect service minutes on IEPs

Current open positions in Special Education

Special Education Teachers:

- Discovery Middle School
- Centennial Elementary (new FTE)
- Eagles Elementary (Contracted Position)
- Bennett Elementary (hold over from last year)
- Washington Elementary (SHINE classroom, resignation)
- Centennial Elementary (resignation)
- Ben Franklin (hold over from last year)
- Self Directed Academy (new FTE)
- Ed Clapp Elementary (new FTE)
- North High (resignation)
- South High (resignation)

Speech and Language Pathologists:

- Kennedy Elementary (resignation)
- District

What are Resource Rooms?

Resource Rooms are specialized educational settings within a school where students with disabilities receive individualized or small group instruction for part of the day. These rooms are designed to support students who spend most of their day in general education classrooms but need additional help in certain areas.

Key Features:

- Part-time Support: Students typically spend part of their day in the general education classroom and part of their day in the resource room.
- Individualized Instruction: Focus on specific areas where the student needs help, such as reading, math, or writing.
- Specialized Staff: Staffed by a special education teacher who provide tailored instruction and interventions.
- Integration with General Education: Emphasis on supporting students to succeed in their general education classes.

Who Benefits?

- Students with mild to moderate disabilities who can participate in the general education curriculum with some additional support.
- Students who need help with specific subjects or skills but do not require intensive, full-day special education services.

What are Extended Resource Rooms?

Extended Resource Rooms provide a more intensive level of support compared to traditional Resource Rooms. Students in these settings typically spend a greater portion of their day receiving specialized instruction.

Key Features:

- Increased Support Time: Students spend more time in the extended resource room, often for multiple subjects or extended periods, compared to a traditional resource room.
- Comprehensive Instruction: Offers support across various subjects and may include life skills training, behavioral support, and social skills development.
- Highly Individualized Programs: Tailored to meet more significant educational and developmental needs.
- Dedicated Environment: A more structured and supportive setting that may include specialized equipment and resources.

Who Benefits?

- Students with moderate to severe disabilities who require more intensive support than what is available in a traditional resource room.
- Students who need a highly individualized and structured learning environment to make progress.

Preparing for School in August for Families of Students with IEPs (Focus on Transitional Grades)

Transitioning to a new school grade can be particularly challenging for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and their families. Here's a comprehensive guide on how to prepare for school in August, with a focus on transitional grades such as entering kindergarten, moving from elementary to middle school, or middle to high school.

How Parents Can Prepare:

- 1. Review your child's IEP:**
 - Understand Goals and Services: Make sure you are familiar with your child's current IEP, including their goals, accommodations, and services.
 - Update Information: If there have been any changes in your child's needs, schedule an IEP meeting to update the document.
- 2. Plan for the Transition:**
 - Visit the New School: Arrange visits to the new school and meet with staff, including special education teachers and support personnel.
 - Discuss the Transition: Talk with your child about what to expect, addressing any concerns they may have.
- 3. Collaborate with the School:**
 - Communicate with the IEP Team: Reach out to the current and future IEP teams to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of services.
 - Provide Documentation: Share any relevant assessments, reports, and medical records with the new school.
- 4. Prepare Your Child:**
 - Social Stories: Use social stories or visual aids to help your child understand what the new school day will look like.
 - Practice Routines: Establish and practice routines that will be similar to the school schedule, such as wake-up times and getting ready in the morning.
 - Skill Building: Work on any specific skills that may help your child adjust, such as navigating the new school building or using a locker.
- 5. Organize Logistics:**
 - Transportation Plans: Confirm transportation arrangements, especially if your child requires special transportation services.
 - School Supplies: Ensure you have all necessary school supplies and any special equipment your child might need.

How Schools Prepare:

1. Review and Update IEPs:

- IEP Meetings: Conduct IEP meetings to review and update plans, ensuring they reflect any new goals and services needed for the next grade.
- Transition Plans: Develop detailed transition plans, including strategies for supporting the student in the new environment.

2. Spring Preparations:

- Roll up Meetings: Hold meetings between current and future teachers, including special education staff, to discuss each student's needs.

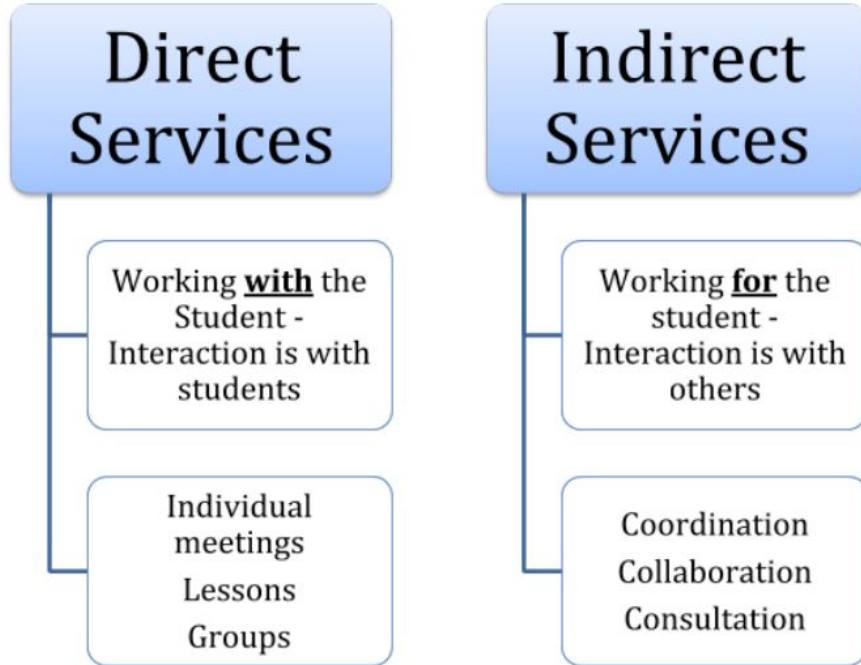
3. Staff Training and Coordination:

- Professional Development: Provide training for teachers and staff on the curricular tools and effective instructional strategies.
 - i. STAR/LINKS Training for Administrators
 - ii. EBR release day
- Collaboration Time: Allow for staff to observe students who are transitioning to a new grade level. Engage in collaborative conversations.

4. Facility and Resource Preparation:

- Classroom Setup: Ensure classrooms are set up with necessary accommodations and equipment.
- Resource Allocation: Make sure all required materials, including assistive technology, are available and ready for use.

Comparison of Direct and Indirect Services



Understanding Direct Services

Definition

Direct services involve the provision of specialized instruction and support directly to the student, tailored to their specific educational goals and needs.

Examples

academic services, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and social skills instruction are all examples of direct services provided in accordance with an IEP.

Direct services:

"Direct services" means special education services provided by a teacher or a related service professional when the services are related to instruction, including cooperative teaching. May be provided individually or in groups.

Direct services may be offered in a variety of settings (the classroom, the cafeteria, the playground or other school settings). The type, location, and amount of services are adjusted to meet the needs of the student. Whenever possible, the intervention should be provided in the least restrictive setting and result in the least amount of disruption to the student's academic day.

Examples of Direct Services:

- Speech and language therapy sessions to improve oral communication skills
- Occupational therapy to enhance fine motor skills and functional abilities
- One-on-one or small group instruction to address specific academic and/or behavioral needs

Benefits of Direct Instruction

- Direct services provide personalized attention and support tailored to the unique learning and developmental needs of the student.
- They can lead to significant improvements in academic performance, social skills, and overall well-being of the student.

Understanding Indirect Services

Definition

Indirect services involve the support and collaboration provided to educators and other school personnel to enhance the student's overall educational experience.

Importance

These services help create an inclusive and supportive environment that fosters the student's academic and social growth.

Indirect services:

"Indirect services" means special education services which include ongoing progress reviews; cooperative planning; consultation; demonstration teaching; modification and adaptation of the environment, curriculum, materials, or equipment. Indirect services may be provided by a teacher or related services professional to another regular education, special education teacher, related services professional, paraprofessional, support staff, parents, and public and nonpublic agencies to the extent that the services are written in the pupil's IEP's.

Indirect services, or consultative services, are provided when a student's IEP specifies support for school personnel as a part of the accommodations, modifications, or supplemental support services provided to a teacher on behalf of the student. These services include providing information and demonstrating effective instructional and facilitation procedures. The special programs staff may provide support for staff or analyze, adapt, modify, and create instructional materials and assistive technology for targeted students. While providing indirect services on behalf of a child, the therapist will monitor the student's progress.

Examples of indirect services:

- consult and collaborate with general education teachers about curriculum adaptations and modifications;
- plan cooperatively for co-teaching;
- train staff on behavior intervention plans;
- coordinate interagency services if a student receives services outside of the school day relevant to the IEP (i.e., children's mental health services, developmental disabilities case management, private therapy, etc.);
- coordinate services for all of the service providers involved with the IEP;
- train general education teachers and paraprofessionals about the nature of a specific student's disability and that student's needs;
- monitor student progress through data collection and review.

Examples of Indirect Service - Related Service Providers, Low-Incidence Specialists

- train teachers and paraprofessionals how to use and monitor audiological equipment;
- monitor correct speech sound production in natural environments;
- train paraprofessionals how to lift and position students with physical disabilities to prevent injury to staff and students;
- make ongoing adaptations to the physical environment to ensure student access;
- train general education teachers how to prevent overstimulation in the classroom for students with autism spectrum disorder and how to use intervention strategies when over-stimulation occurs;
- review assistive technology options that will meet the needs of an individual student and train staff in use of the technology chosen.

Benefits of Indirect Instruction

- Indirect services contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for the student within the general education setting.
- They also enable the integration of students with disabilities into the general education classroom while ensuring they receive necessary support.

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Meeting timeline

There will be 4 (quarterly) FPS SEPAC meetings during the school year. Meetings will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month starting at 5:30 PM and will not exceed 2 hours in length. Meeting dates and agendas will be published on the FPS website and sent to parents of students who have disabilities via Blackboard or other electronic communication method. The Chairperson in collaboration with the Director or Assistant Director of Special Education will make every attempt to hold the first meeting before the last working day in October. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled at the end of each current meeting.

Thank you!

Are there topics you'd like discussed?

If you think of the topics after this meeting, please email

Shelby DiFonzo @ difonzs@fargo.k12.nd.us