

Letter of Agreement
between
Highline Education Association
and
Highline School District

**Secondary Inclusive Service Model Pilots
Effective School Year 2025-26**

As the Highline School District (District or HSD) continues to move toward more inclusive models of special education services, the District and the Highline Education Association (Association or HEA) continues to use the Joint Inclusive Services Team (JIST) to monitor the progress of pilot models and approaches, to assess implications of model changes, and to make regular recommendations to HEA and HSD Leadership. For the 2025-26 school year, upon recommendation of the JIST, HEA and HSD agree to this Letter of Agreement (LOA) to provide additional flexibility for Secondary Inclusive Education Cohort Schools in Year 2 or above, within the parameters outlined below, to pilot alternative structures in support of more inclusive special education services for students.

Schools in Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 of the inclusive schools phase-in (Highline HS, Sylvester, Chinook, Innovation Heights, Big Picture, Maritime, Highline Virtual Academy) are eligible to participate in this LOA. In order to move forward with participation, a super-majority (60% or higher) of their special education teaching staff must vote to proceed and the building principal must be in agreement. Each school's HEA Representative(s) will assist in conducting the vote to ensure anonymity and participation by all impacted special education teachers.

ESAs, general education teachers, and/or paraprofessional staff may be involved in the discussions about any potential pilot of inclusive service models, but will not be considered voting, special education teachers in the decision-making about whether to proceed with participation in the LOA.

Any plans for piloting alternative inclusive structures will be developed collaboratively by the building administrative team, special education case managers, and others (e.g., ESAs, general education teachers) as appropriate, depending upon which staff members will be impacted. Prior to conducting a vote to participate in the LOA and pilot inclusive structures, the building principal will schedule dedicated time, a minimum of 1-2 hours, for a staff discussion during principal-directed time (e.g., staff meeting, PCT) to review this Letter of Agreement, outline the plans for any pilot structures, explain the impact on building staff, and allow ample time for questions and discussion prior to the vote.

Should a school vote to pilot one or more alternative structures, as provided in this LOA, the building principal must send email notification by June 1, 2025 to the HSD Labor-Management Representative, the HEA President, and the appropriate Director of Special Education; the school's HEA building representative(s) and the WEA UniServ Director should be copied on the

email. Such notification must include the results of the vote (categories of staff who voted, vote count and percent in favor) and an explanation of the alternative structures the school will be piloting.

1. Staffing Allocation Consistent with CBA

Special education staffing allocations to each building will proceed consistent with CBA language and current practice, as outlined in Article 4B of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). If the number of students enrolled at a specific building in a specific program have met the “hard cap” specified by the CBA, any potential incoming student will need to be balanced or an additional section added, consistent with current practice. Likewise, paraprofessional support will be allocated to the buildings consistent with the CBA, current practice, and as outlined in students’ IEPs.

2. Special Education Teacher Schedule & Flexible Service Delivery

All schools, regardless of Inclusion Cohort status, may utilize a Flexible Service Delivery (FSD) model, meaning case managers may be providing support in planning or delivering Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for students with IEPs who are not on their caseload. In an inclusive context, this may be accomplished in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- Co-teaching – A collaborative teaching approach where two educators (one inclusive education teacher and one general education teacher) plan, teach, and assess students to improve outcomes for all. Initial training and ongoing support could be provided by the inclusive education department and/or department heads. Co-planning opportunities necessary for successful implementation.
- Push-In Support - A model of providing special education support where a special education teacher (or paraeducator under the direction of a special education teacher) spend a portion of a class period providing support in a general education classroom. Collaboration with the general education teacher is still a necessary element, but the staff providing push-in support are less involved in lesson planning due to more limited availability.
- Unified Classes - Unified courses are opportunities for students not on IEPs to provide mentoring to their same-age peers with more significant needs (such as those previously served in ILC settings). Students without IEPs choose to experience this model, and learn alongside their peers with IEPs, while providing support at the same time.
- Assessment, Collaboration, Teaming time (ACT time)
 - ACT time could be aligned with general education teachers’ planning time to provide opportunities for co-planning time.
 - See ACT Time LOA on page 212 of CBA.

Centralized Scheduling can and should be used to facilitate paraprofessional support and flexible service delivery by both special education teachers and paraprofessionals. The following process will be used to determine case manager and paraprofessional schedules in support of inclusive service models and flexible service delivery:

- Each school’s building administration in conjunction with special education department heads(s) will develop a draft schedule for flexible service delivery based upon

student/classroom need, in a meeting/format that allows comment, discussion, questions, revision etc.

- Special education teachers/case managers will be allowed a feedback/requested adjustment period of not less than one week when they can request changes in writing to the proposed draft schedule.
- A finalized FSD schedule will be presented to special education teachers/case managers by building administration. Any requests for changes that were not honored will be specifically addressed in writing explaining the rationale for not making the change.
- The flexible service delivery schedule will be re-examined potentially adjusted on a regular basis, semesterly at a minimum, to address evolving student needs.
- Principal-Directed Collaboration Time (see Successful and Meaningful Inclusion LOA) could be utilized in support of FSD collaboration at the discretion of the building administrator. Teacher/ESA-directed Collaborative PCT time could also be used for this purpose, at the discretion of teachers/ESAs.

Any school participating in Flexible Service Delivery (FSD) alongside an Alternative Case Management (ACM) Structure pilot, as outlined below, must include a description of both their FSD model and their ACM structure when reporting participation in an LOA pilot.

3. Alternative Case Management (ACM) Model Structures

Schools participating in an Inclusive Staffing Model Pilot may utilize their contractual staffing allocation to distribute special education caseloads on the basis of grade levels, grade bands, departments, houses, alphabetically, or any other grouping identified and agreed upon by building staff that will facilitate more inclusive services to students and balance case manager workloads to the greatest extent possible. This workload balancing may include distributing students across program, either by calculating caseload percentages programmatically or by using a system of leveling students' need for support, regardless of assigned program, as outlined below. Additional goals for utilizing an alternative case management structure would be increasing opportunities for deeper collaboration between special education and general education teachers, and over time, moving away from siloed self-contained special education spaces to an inclusive model that provides the support students need to be increasingly successful in general education settings alongside their peers.

Schools may choose to utilize a hybrid of the alternative case management (ACM) model structure and the contractual staffing model, should they choose to retain one or more special education teachers as programmatically-based.

3.A. Leveling Process Option for ACM Structures – *primarily intended for middle schools and choice/alternative schools at this time*

In the event a school decides to pilot an alternative case management structure that involves calculating case manager workload based on students' need for support, rather than programmatic designations, the following process must be followed. Using a Student Support Leveling document with three levels, which is currently under development, each participating school's special education staff, in consultation with building administration and the assigned

inclusion specialist, will collaboratively determine whether the support needs identified for each student with an IEP fall into Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 in each area in which they receive services. The team will then use the mode of those scores to attain an overall impact/support level for that student. If there are two levels constituting the mode, the higher level will be assigned. Additionally, if an individual student's behavior rating is a Level 3, then that student will be considered to need Level 3 supports; likewise, if a student's DHH rating is a Level 3, then that student will be considered to need Level 3 supports. Perspectives of ESAs and general education teachers should be included in the leveling process.

Every effort should be made to calibrate level assignment of students within buildings, and calibration between buildings is encouraged when possible. The JIST, with assistance of cohort school staff, will continue to work towards calibration of leveling documents and processes between schools.

3.B. Workload Calculations for Alternative Case Management Model Structures

Schools electing to pilot an ACM structure have two options for calculating workload.

Programmatic Percentage Calculation: The first option is to utilize a direct calculation of workload percentage per student, according to the student's programmatic assignment in their IEP, as outlined in the chart below.

Existing Program (Allocation numbers)	Workload Percentage
Learning Resource Center/LRC (25)	4%
Integrated Academic Center/IAC (13)	8%
Integrated Learning Center/ILC (8) Emotional Behavioral Center/EBC (8) Deaf & Hard of Hearing (8)	12%

Support Level Calculation: The second option is to exercise the leveling process for students as identified in Section 3.A. and then use a "crosswalk" between student need levels and existing programmatic staffing limits as follows. Keep in mind that programmatic designations are included in the chart as a contractual reference only; for example, a student historically in the LRC program could have Level 2 support needs (rather than Level 1), while a student historically in an ILC program might also have Level 2 support needs (rather than Level 3).

Student Need Level	Existing Program Allocation numbers (only for reference; students may be leveled outside assigned program)	Workload Percentage
Level 1	Learning Resource Center/LRC (25)	4%
Level 2	Integrated Academic Center/IAC (13)	8%
Level 3	Integrated Learning Center/ILC (8) Emotional Behavioral Center/EBC (8)	12%

	Deaf & Hard of Hearing (8)	
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In either case, once an individual case manager's workload exceeds 100%, overload mitigation would apply, as outlined below.

3.C. Overload Mitigation for Alternative Case Management Staffing Model Structures

In the event a school elects to pilot an ACM structure, students will not be programmatically distributed to case managers, so an alternative mitigation structure pilot is necessary, as well. Any required paraprofessional staffing mitigation will be allocated per CBA and distributed according to the school's FSD model. Any financial mitigation for case managers will be allocated as follows. Prior to financial mitigation for a particular teacher, there is an expectation that caseloads be balanced in order to avoid overload.

Initial student pushing workload above 100%

- One student over 100% up to 4% \$5/day
- One student over 100% 5% - 8% \$15/day
- One student over 100% 9% - 12% \$25/day

Each additional student overload over the initial student exceeding 100%:

- Student at Level 1/LRC \$5/day
- Student at Level 2/IAC \$15/day
- Student at Level 3/EBC, ILC, DHH \$25/day

In the event that any individual special education teacher exceeds a 116% caseload, this would be considered a "hardship" requiring an agreement between the principal and the teacher to acknowledge the overload and notification of the HEA president, all documented in writing (email is acceptable).

In the event that the building-wide total percentage equals 110% times the number of allocated case managers and/or the number of students with IEPs exceed the CBA programmatic numbers, this will trigger a conversation between building teams and Special Education administrators about potential additional staffing.

Mitigation Example: If a teacher's workload was at 98% and they received an additional student with Level 1 needs on their caseload, that would bring their workload to 102% and they would receive \$5/day in mitigation. If they received another student with Level 2 needs, they would receive \$20/day: \$5 for the initial student and \$15 for the second.

4. ACT (Assessment, Collaboration, Teaming) Time

Special education teachers in schools utilizing the alternative staffing model will be allocated ACT time during the workweek whenever possible, minimizing the need for release days covered by substitute teachers. Plans for ACT Time should be developed collaboratively between special education teachers and administrators, consistent with the ACT Time LOA. If special education teachers have a schedule in which they receive less than 225 minutes/week of ACT, a proportional amount of release days will be provided annually as outlined here.

225 min/week + 0 release days

180-224 min/week +1 release day
135-179 min/week + 2 release days
90-134 min/week + 3 release days
45-89 min/week + 4 release days
0-44 min/week +5 release days

Lost ACT time due to providing substitute coverage will be compensated consistent with lost planning time. However, case managers should not be placed on a substitute coverage rotation during their ACT time or other inclusion periods, but only during their planning time; any substitute coverage during ACT Time, co-teaching periods, or inclusion support periods should be as a last-resort, emergency occurrence only.

5. Flexible Spaces

In an increasingly inclusive educational context, schools may find it helpful to have multiple spaces throughout the building available for use by small groups and/or individual students and educators. Should the need for flexible space interfere with any certificated staff member's contractual rights to facilities, as outlined in Section 4A.12, the principal is required to consult with the impacted staff member(s), as well as special education teachers and ESA staff, to determine an appropriate plan for shared space usage.

Any such shared space plan must ensure that each staff member has secure storage for confidential materials, and time for individual access to the space to allow for private meetings, evaluations, and phone conversations. A recommended protocol is to develop a schedule for all potentially shared spaces to provide protected planning/ACT/case management times for staff members utilizing that space, and times when the space may be utilized for flexible service delivery.

6. Inclusion Roll-up to Middle School

As elementary students transition to Middle School, intentional effort is necessary to facilitate a successful transition between schools, particularly in the first few years when some students will be arriving from schools from a wide range of inclusion cohorts. The following steps are recommended when students are transitioning from an inclusive elementary school that has been functioning under the Elementary Inclusive Staffing LOA for one or more years, to a middle school that is not using the Secondary Inclusive Service LOA or is just beginning to use it.

- In November of each school year, meetings begin between sending and receiving teams (Case Managers, Building Leaders, school psychologists and counselors from both settings) should be scheduled to provide information regarding services students receive in their current settings.
- As early as February of each school year, sending and receiving teams (Case Managers, Building Leaders, school psychologists and counselors from both settings) arrange visits between both sites
 - Elementary site visits would provide observation of student services.
 - Middle School site visits would provide observation and insight into middle school scheduling and class offerings.
- After the February visits, members of the sending and receiving teams should review IEPs and student levels to determine amendments to provide appropriate supports for the transition (dual matrix on the IEP).
- Sending and receiving teams review class offerings at the middle school and utilize the [Continuum Tool](#) determine where student services can be delivered.

- Teams are encouraged to continue to collaborate and meet to discuss the transition throughout the spring.

7. Ongoing Monitoring

It is anticipated that schools will need to monitor and adjust to both student and staff reactions to the alternative staffing model as the year progresses. Any adjustments that cannot be made within the parameters of this LOA and/or existing CBA language will be referred to HEA/HSD Labor-Management to address via problem-solving or impact bargaining.



Dr. Steve Grubb
Associate Superintendent
Highline School District



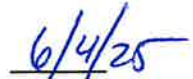
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President

Highline Education Association



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