

IDEA: SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

ACTION

Ask your members of Congress to introduce legislation that would add flexibility to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by supporting innovative service delivery models.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

IDEA should encourage local flexibility in the delivery of services such as looking at a practitioner's total workload (students plus non-direct services), 3:1 models (provide three weeks of direct services to students and one week of indirect services for planning, meetings, collaboration, professional development, and paperwork), telepractice, or other service delivery models. Large student caseloads limit practitioners' opportunities for planning, meetings, collaboration, professional development, and completing required paperwork. Large caseloads erode practitioners' morale and professional growth, which drives them away from school settings to other settings. Most school districts look at practitioner caseloads to maintain compliance with IDEA mandates.

The U.S. Department of Education, with regard to IDEA, has not provided enough guidance to states to encourage newer practice models at the state and local levels. Therefore, states and school districts are reluctant to implement innovative practice models under the IDEA law. Adding these options to IDEA would clearly indicate congressional support and spur the Department into action on innovating new alternative service delivery models.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- Allow and encourage states and districts to implement innovative service delivery models.
- Establish in the new IDEA demonstration sites as competitive grants in order to collect data regarding the effectiveness of different service delivery models.
- Strengthen coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) language in IDEA to ensure that regular education funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) are the primary source of support for struggling learners.
- Strengthen existing CEIS language to encourage broader use of this program by states and districts.
- Include Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) in the professional development activities allowed under CEIS in IDEA.
- Encourage the use of telepractice, as appropriate, to reduce barriers and offer an alternative service delivery model, particularly in districts with personnel shortages.

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